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A BOOK OF THE
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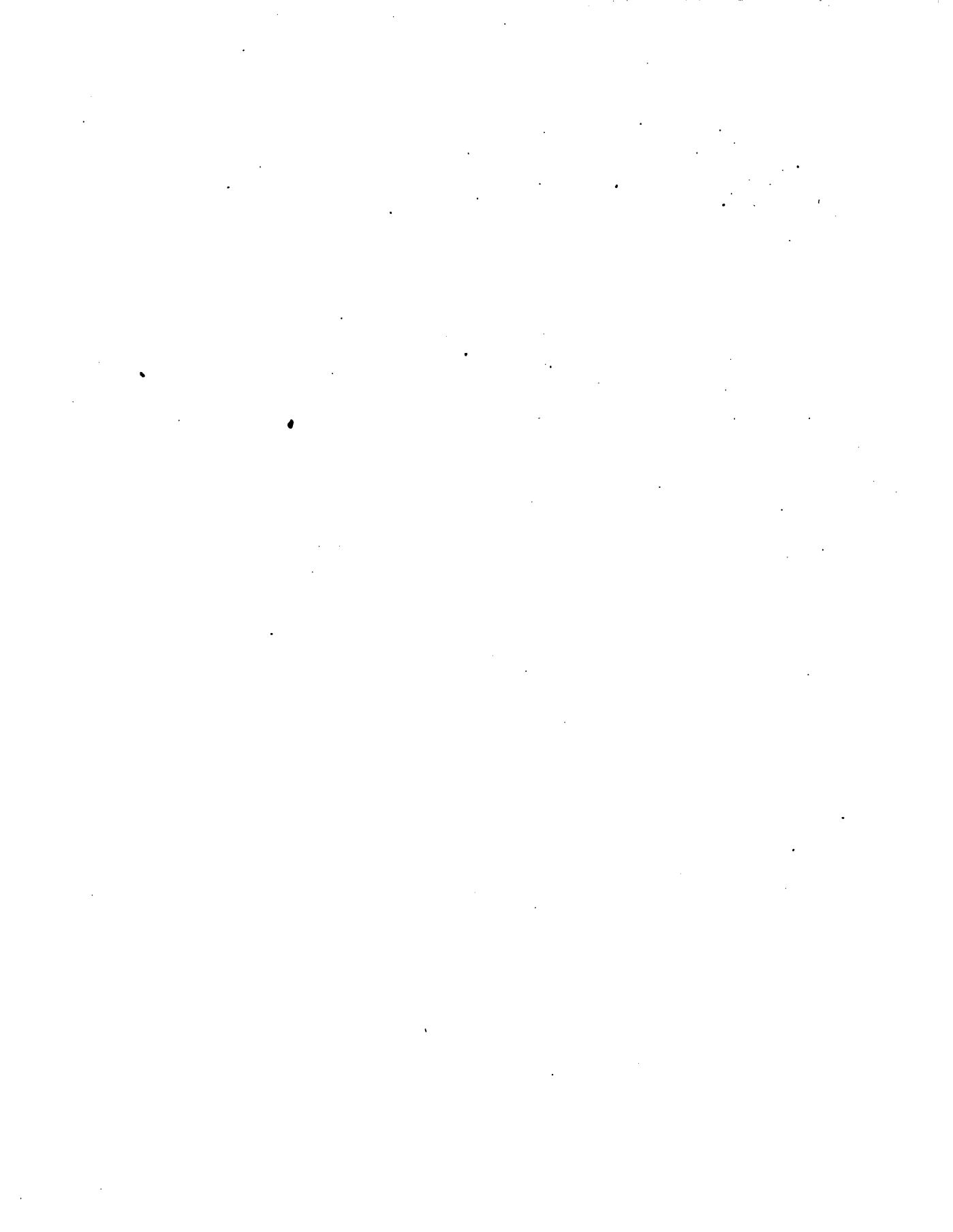
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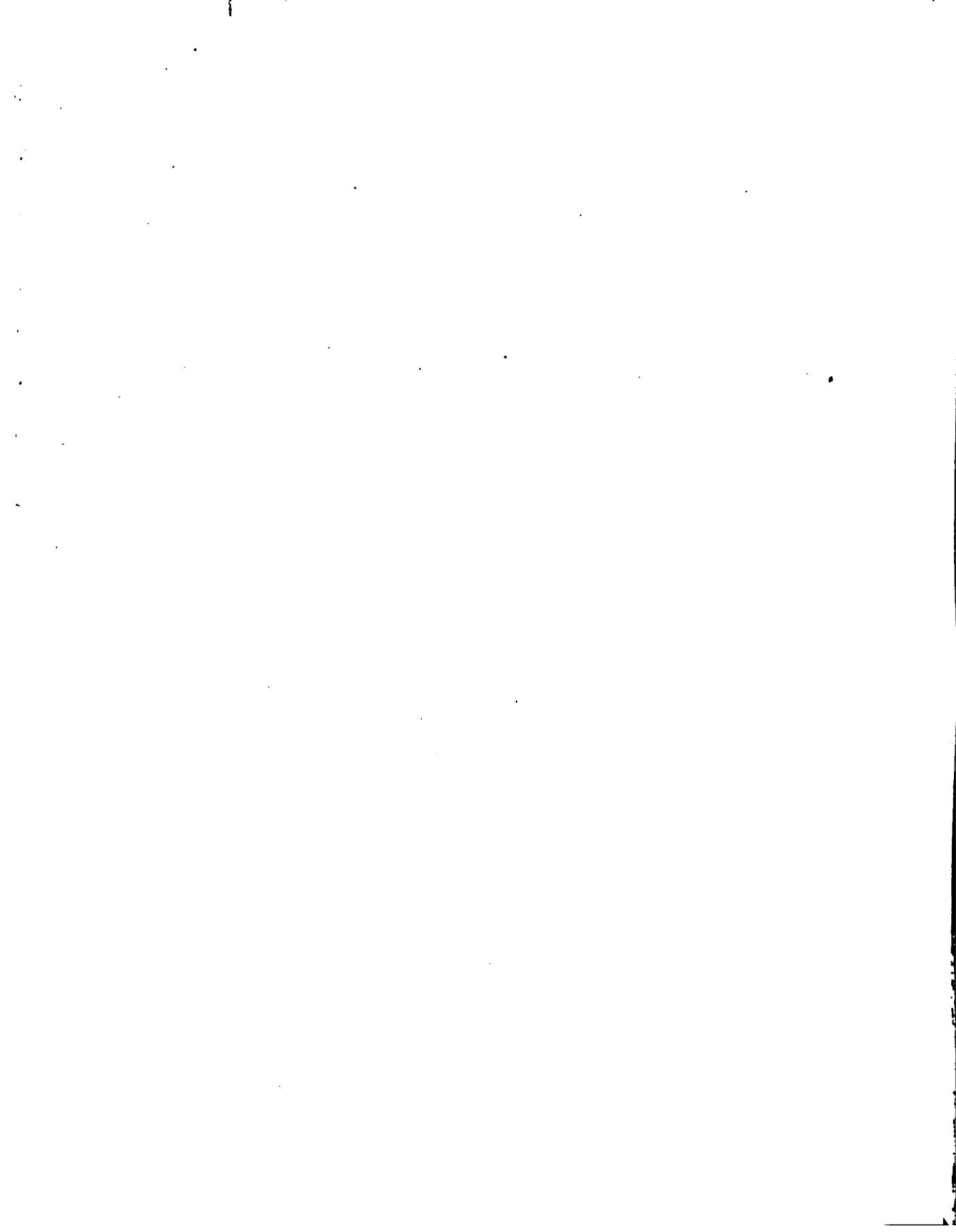
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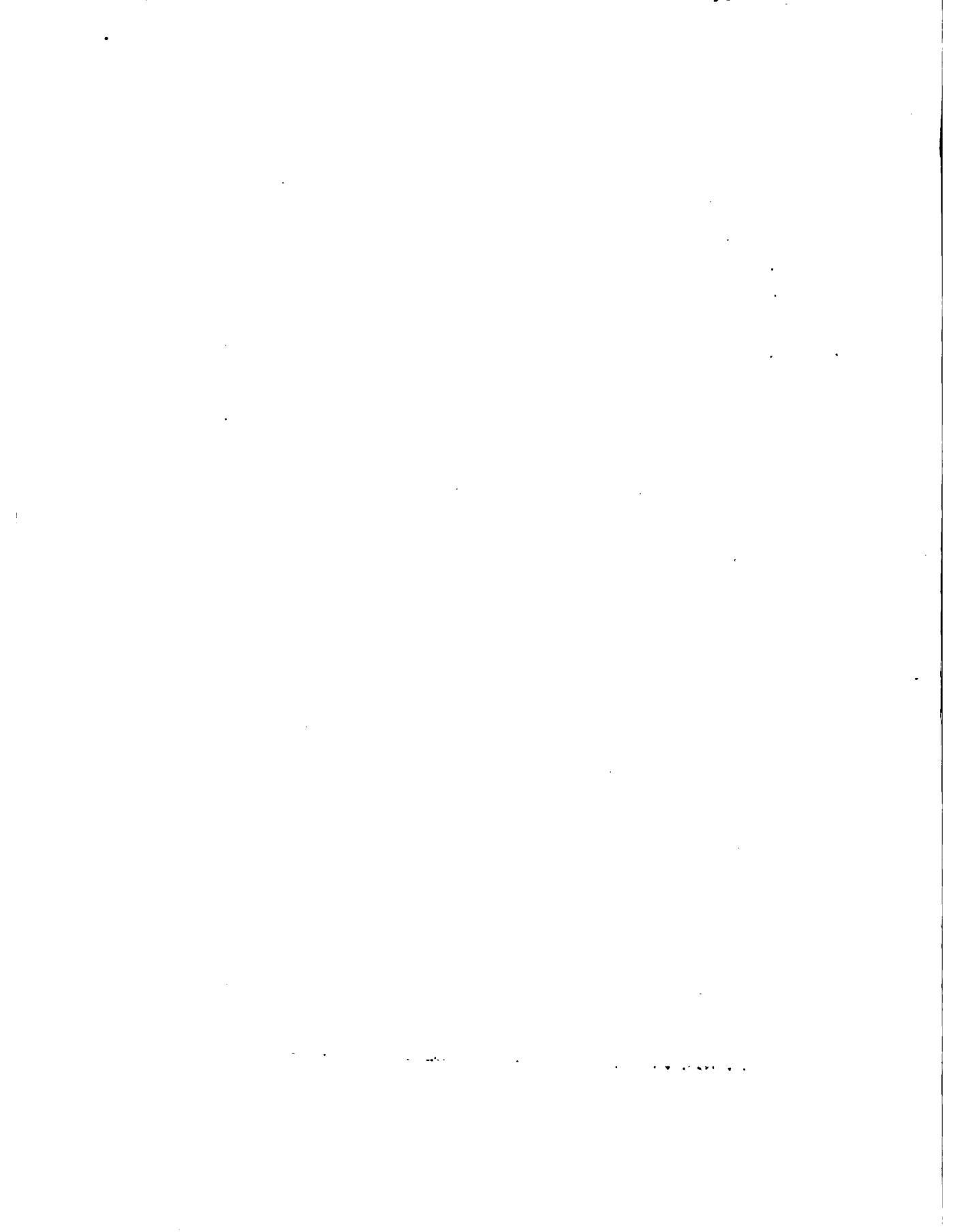


THE CHURCH OF DEIR, FROM ADEN.



ANALYSIS

JOHN F. COOPER



A BOOK OF THE PARISH OF DEIR.

EDITED BY

ALEXANDER LAWSON, B.D.,
=
MINISTER OF DEER.



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TO THE
Reverend Robert CUSHNY, B.D.,
MINISTER OF LONGSIDE, AND CLERK OF THE PRESBYTERY OF DEER.

MY DEAR CUSHNY,

I am old-fashioned enough to wish a patron, and with your goodwill I dedicate this **BOOK OF THE PARISH** to you, as the best of neighbours and staunchest of friends, and as one of the most sagacious of brother-ministers in a somewhat trying time. I owe it to you more than to anyone that I have an interest in the parish of Deer. Personal regard goes with cordial recognition of your public merit, and this is not lessened by the knowledge that you worthily represent a long line of able and devoted ministers of the Church of Scotland.

I am, MY DEAR CUSHNY,

Yours most sincerely,

ALEXANDER LAWSON.

MANSE OF DEER,

15th July, 1896.



P R E F A C E.

THIS book is designed to give, in simple and readable form, all that is of general interest about the Parish, and at the same time it is meant to supply, with reasonable fulness, what can only be expected to attract those who have some special tie to the district.

The Editor is responsible for the arrangement of the volume, and he has written all the chapters save those which are noted as being, in whole or in part, the work of friends whose names are given. He is much indebted to Mr. James Ferguson, Younger of Kinmundy, Advocate-Depute, to the Rev. James Cooper, D.D., to Mr. Spence, to Mr. Robert Wilson, and to Mr. John Fullerton, for their willing co-operation, all the more valued because they wrote amid press of work of their own. To Mr. Ferguson he is under particular obligation, not only for his general outline of the history of the parish, but also for permission to use "Records of the Clan Ferguson," and an article by him in the *Journal of Jurisprudence* upon the first three Fergusons of Pitfour. He desires to acknowledge the great courtesy of Colonel F. S. Russell, M.P., of Aden, of Colonel Ferguson of Pitfour, through Mr. Ainslie, Mr. Ferguson of Kinmundy, Dr. R. M. Wilson, Mr. Taylor, Toux, and Mr. W. M. Price, for the use of books, drawings, and papers. He has had friendly help on several matters of detail from the Rev. Robert Sinker, D.D., Cambridge, Mr. J. Maitland Anderson, St. Andrews University Library, and Mr. P. J. Anderson, LL.B., Aberdeen University Library.

All the illustrations, but one kindly given by Mr. Burnett-Stuart of Dens and Crichtie, are reproductions of photographs by Mr. Shivas, Peterhead.

The Rev. Robert Cushny, the Rev. Thomas Bell, Keig, and the Rev. S. Ree,

Boharm, Mr. W. L. Taylor, Peterhead, the Rev. Duncan M'Gregor, of Inverallochy, the Rev. J. H. Burn, A. C. Cameron, Esq., LLD., and the Rev. W. Lloyd Robinson, Stuartfield, have also helped with information about various persons, names, and incidents.

The Presbytery and Kirk-Session records, and other MS. sources, have been used, where available, as in the copy of Mr. Forbes's petition lent from Kinmundy House. The Spalding Club volumes and Scott's "Fasti" have been largely drawn upon; and Theiner, Bellesheim, Skene, and Hill Burton have all been utilised, as well as the "Dictionary of National Biography."

The chapter on the "Lands of the Parish and their Owners" has been deliberately restricted that it might not be out of proportion to the rest of the contents.

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A BOOK OF THE PARISH OF DEIR.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory—The Parish: Its Name and Limits.

THE name of the parish is spelt with even more than the common variation characteristic of all old Scottish records in dealing with places. It is given Dear, Deare, Deer, Deir, Dere, Deyre, Dier, and Diere. DEER has for long been the common spelling, but DEIR prevails in the oldest writings, and it indicates the derivation. Yet derivations have varied almost as much as spelling. The Celtic monk, who wrote the legend of the planting of Christianity in the province, derives it from *deara*, tears. The writer of the "View of the Diocese of Aberdeen" says that the inhabitants connected the name with deer, while Mr. George Cruden, schoolmaster of the parish, in the *Old Statistical Account*, makes it *De a'r'*, a contraction for *De adhra*—the worship of God, and thinks the name may be due to the fact that the first church in the district was planted here. DEIR is really OAKWOOD—old Gaelic, or Irish, *dair* or *daire*, an oak—and one naturally concludes that there were oak forests in the neighbourhood, and that they were not so common elsewhere in the region, although abundant in this nook of it. Tears and oak were not unconnected in the Celtic idea of the House of God. "The earliest Irish words for a church," says Dr. Skene, "are *duirthech*—the house made of oak, and *deirthech*—the house where tears are shed." Durrow and Derry, the two great Columban monasteries in Ireland, were in districts rich in oak, and, according to the same authority, had their names from this fact. Derry in Irish is *Daire*, which seems but an earlier Deir, and Durrow is *Dearmach*—the field of the oaks. Dryburgh is *darach bruach*—the oak-bank. One wonders if we have in these many localities named from the oak a corroboration of the tradition that many Christian sanctuaries were built on the sites of earlier Pagan holy places. There was wisdom in it, if it were so, and right feeling, too, for it allowed the sacredness of the past, always. If Saint Columba indeed gave the town its name, the beautiful situation, recalling much-loved spots in his native Ireland, not less than the tears of Drostan, would impel him to say, "Let Dear be its name!" The Saint had a keen love of nature, and

the cluster of rude huts round the Mormaer Bede's stronghold on the bend of the Ugie, where the Church of Deir now stands, could not hide the meadows by the stream, the woods on the surrounding heights, and the sweep of the river itself, as it wound through Aluinn Alden, even then the bonnie braes, or burn. The sight, after many changes, will still touch a spirit less susceptible than that of the great Celtic apostle.

Deir was thus, at first, "this town," and the Celtic monastery to which the town was gifted. It would have a group of monks' cottages of wattles and clay, and there would be the wooden church where the Northern Picts first received the Sacraments and heard the Word of God. If, as is probable, the earliest church was built where the small fragment of the pre-Reformation Parish Church yet stands, there has been a HOUSE OF GOD upon the same spot for thirteen hundred years.



PRE-REFORMATION CHURCH.

When parishes were defined, and territory took the place of clan in ecclesiastical organisation, the Parish of Deir embraced within its borders the monastic possessions in the immediate neighbourhood of the Abbey, as well as other lands adjoining. It practically covered the present parishes of Old and New Deer, as they are called. This large area extends to more than 50,000 acres. When one remembers the great care of the old Church for everything pertaining to religion, it comes as a surprise that the only places of worship were at Deir itself, at the Abbey of Deir, possibly also at the southern extremity of Stuartfield, where there

is a chapel well, and certainly at the Chapel of Auchreddie. The statement of Alexander Keith that there was a chapel at Knaven is probably a slip for Auchreddie. No trace of a chapel remains at Knaven. The probability is that the people preferred to worship on the spot specially sacred in their eyes and hallowed by old associations.

After the Reformation, Deir was early named the seat of a Presbytery; and in 1581, along with the Presbyteries of Bamfe and Kildrinnie, it formed the Synod of Bamfe. The parish was immediately after 1560 conjoined with Foveran, Peterugie, and Langley, and one pastor had thus something like an archdeaconry rather than a parish. As the Reformed Church developed her organisation it was evident that, even without these temporary additions, the parish was much too large, and arrangements were made to divide it into an "Old Paroche of Deir" and a "New Paroche of Deir." Preparatory to this, however, the Parish of Fetterangus was formally separated from Saint Fergus. These had been vicarages of the great Abbey of Aberbrothock, and had been given to the monks of S. Thomas at the beginning of the thirteenth century by Ralph le Neym, the head of a family "which had possessions on the eastern marches between England and Scotland and in Tweeddale." Fetterangus was definitely united to Deir by an Act of the Presbytery:—

"The Presbyterie haulden at the Kirk of Deire, 12th November, 1618:—
Inter alia: The said day the Brethering of the Presbyterie of Deir being convenit at the said Kirk considerin the decret of the Lordes of the Plat haldin at Edinburgh in [] last bypast, in the quhilk it is ordenit that the paroche and parochineries of Fetterangus in all tyme coming sall be unitit and annexit unto the Kirk of Deir as thair ordinar paroch kirk and parochineries thairoff, thair to resaive the comfort of the Word and benefit of the sacraments with other privileges belonging thairunto, and haivan received commission and commandment from the Bischop of Aberdein [Patrick Forbes of Corse] to see that decret put in execution, compearit before thein the eldership and greyttest part of the housholders of that paroch, being chargit to that effect, wha having the tenour of that Act and decret intimat unto them, and knowing how they had been servit of befoir, and how impossible it was unto them, being but of ane mein number to interteine ane resident pastour among them, as lykwayes, considerin how commodious they were to the Kirk of Deir, willingly consentit to submit themselves to the obedience of the decret of the Lordes of the Plat—according to the will of the Presbyterie—promising faithfully in all time coming to frequent the Kirk of Deir as thair onlie paroch kirk for the comfort of the Word and benefit of the sacraments, and to submit themselves to all manner of ordinance for maintenance of doctrin and disciplin as the rest of the parochineries of the congregation of Deir. To the quhilk effect Mr. David Robertson, thair former pastour [minister of Langley, now Saint Fergus], delyverit to Mr. Abraham Sibbald, now thair present minister, the names of the eldership

with the catalogue of the haill parochiners, discharging himself in all tyme comyn of any care or burden of that people, being now committed to the minister of Deir his charge."

On 27th May, 1619, the question of the Kirk for the new paroche of Deir emerges: "The said day the minister being posit concerning his diligence in building of thair new kirk at the head of the paroche, according to the Act of the Plat, asseverit [that the Earl Marischal] had agreed that that kirk should be situat and buildit at the Chappell of Achchreddie, as a place most commodious for all thaim wha should be assignit to that kirk." In 1622 the new paroche of Deir was erected, and the kirk and parish were known for well nigh a century by the distinctive name of Auchreddie. As the Plat was dissolved in July, 1618, the Acts authorising the addition of Fetterangus and the division of Deir must have been among its final decisions.

For more than two hundred years the parish boundaries remained unaltered, and save for the erection of Episcopal Churches after the Revolution, and of a Secession Church at Clola in 1770, the sole places of worship were the Kirk of Deir and the Kirk of Auchreddie. Savoch in 1851, Ardallie in 1862, Kininmonth in 1874, and Maud in 1889, were successively detached in great or small part from the old territory, so that the present ecclesiastical parish is little more than half the size of the "Old Paroche of Deir," and is thus but a fourth, as near as may be, of the pre-Reformation domain.



VILLAGE OF DEIR.

CHAPTER II.

Our Parish in the Past—Introductory Sketch.

(By James Ferguson, Esq., Advocate, Younger of Kinmundy.)

OLD Deer, though situated in a distant "corner" of the realm, far from the great centres of the nation's life, possesses an interesting past of its own, and enjoys one distinction which renders it unique among the parishes of Scotland. To it belongs the honour of being the centre from which Christianity was first preached in the Northern Lowlands, and the credit of having made and kept for centuries the oldest authentic Scottish book. It was at one time said that for quiet and picturesque beauty the village of Deer stood amongst Scottish villages only second to Dirleton in East Lothian, and that this charm was felt long ago, when first there came to it those who could hand down their impressions to succeeding ages, we know from the quaint words which tell us that "the place was pleasing to Columcille because it was full of God's grace."

When the light of history first breaks on inland Buchan, Deer is found as a centre of authority, and apparently the seat of the lord of the wide district, which the Romans record as inhabited by the great Pictish tribe of the Taixali. The place-names, especially those of the rivers, hills, and other great natural features, prove, even if the *BOOK OF DEER* did not establish the fact, that the country was settled by a Gaelic race. There is, however, a narrative that is neither written in books nor recorded in names still in everyday use. It is printed on the earth by nature for those who can read her characters, and it is left by man in rude memorials of his presence. The rounded flints on the hill of Kinknockie are evidence that the ridge on which they are found was once the shore of an open sea. The peat mosses, formed as they are from vegetation that has lived and died, and containing, as they do, the remains of aquatic plants, even if no canoe hollowed from a single tree had been found in the moss of Knaven, would, where the conformation of the surrounding ground is suitable, indicate that in many places corn-fields occupy what was once a fresh water lake. They do tell us plainly enough, when great trees are dug up, that the country was once well wooded, and that a most common tree was the oak. We know, as well as if a statistical account had been written at the command of Galgacus who faced the legions of Agricola, that long ago much of this parish was forest, that there wandered beneath its oaks red-deer with antlers of a much larger size than living stags carry; that roe hid in its coverts, and that the *Bos primigenius*, or ancient wild bull of Scotland, with spreading horns, white hide, and black points, bellowed and charged in its glades. We know that the pre-historic parishioner

followed the chase—probably clad in the rough belted plaid found depicted on some of the Scottish sculptured stones—and that he fought with stone weapons, rounded battle-axes, and arrowheads, sometimes beautifully and accurately, and sometimes very roughly, chipped from the flints. We have not a few specimens of the stone coffin with its clay urn, sometimes containing calcined bones, in which the great man of these old days was laid to rest in some green mound amid the heather; and the parish was rich in the Druidical circles, or standing stones, of which the one on the hill of Parkhouse is a particularly fine illustration.

Our parish also boasted one of the two illustrations which Buchan affords of the sculptured stones characteristic of the country occupied by the Northern Picts. It stood, when last observed, near the ruins of the Abbey of Deer, and had on one side one of the curious hieroglyphical figures, the meaning of which has not been deciphered, while on the other, probably at a later time after the introduction of Christianity, had been carved a rude cross. There also existed at Aikey Brae the ruins of an ancient village called the Peights' or Picts' Houses. "It consisted of fifty or sixty mossy huts from six to twelve feet square, irregularly huddled together; hence it got the name of the *bouachs*. The walls were built of stones of a small size, and clay; the floors were paved with stones." There were also in the White Cow Wood at Pitfour, and on the top of the Hill of Bruxie, remains called "Picts Castles," and at Den of Howie, near Fetterangus, traces of fortifications and encampments.

Before written history opens, we thus know that the parish was occupied by a Gaelic race, that the inhabitants were probably most numerous in the vicinity of the village of Deer, and that they belonged to the Pictish branch of the Gaelic stock. It must have been between the years 563 and 597 that Columba, with his relative Drostan, both belonging to the Royal race of the Irish and Argyllshire Scots, having converted Brude, the King of the Northern Picts, at Inverness, came eastwards along the Moray Firth and landed in Buchan. The story of his coming is in remarkable contrast to the marvellous and miraculous stories told in the lives of many of the early Celtic saints, and there is not a word of a miracle in the original record, though, doubtless, the incident was often related as an example of a miraculous interposition. It is not only the oldest account of the most ancient historical fact connected with Deer, but I believe the oldest original native account of anything that ever happened in Scotland.

Gordon of Straloch records that the Monastery of Deer was situated "in a low-lying valley wholly covered with wood in bygone days"—"*in depressa valle olim tota sylvestri*." We can imagine the Saint, after crossing the bleak region on the flanks of Mormond, and observing as he passed by some of the old circles, some old heathen—in the words of Ossian—"consulting his god at his mossy-stone of power," on reaching the sheltered valley of the Ugie with its spreading oaks recalling to him his old home, recognising in the calm beauty of the spot an

indication that here, in the very heart of the district, was the suitable centre from which the light of Christianity should radiate.

Columba soon passed on, but he left his relative to watch over the little flock he had gathered at Deer. S. Drostan became the patron saint; his well yet exists; his saint's day is commemorated by Dustan Fair; and the occasion of the translation of part of his relics from Aberdour was—according to one tradition—the origin of Aikey Fair, for many years one of the most famous markets of the North.

A quaint tradition is associated with the building of the first stone church. It is said that the builders had fixed upon Biffie as the best site, but they found that what was built during the day was always thrown down during the night. At last the place was watched, and in "the eerie hours" a voice was heard repeating:—

"It is not here, it is not here,
That ye shall big the kirk o' Deer,
But on the Tap o' Tillery,
Where mony a corp shall after lie."

For some 500 years the whole history of the district now extant is found in the notes written in Gaelic on the margins of the Book of Deer. These form a document of immense value to the historian of early Scotland, and I know none, unless it be the Twelve Tables of Rome, some of the Assyrian tablets, or the Babylonian cliff inscriptions, that in so small compass is so fruitful of priceless information to the annalist. "These memoranda," says Dr. Stuart, "enable us to discover the condition of the Celtic population of Alba separated into clans under the rule of the Mormaer, with their chiefs or toisechs, and their brehons or judges." The record preserves the names of some of the old Mormaers of Buchan, it proves the antiquity of some place-names that still exist, and it refers to persons—among them a Scottish King—who can be identified as appearing elsewhere in Scottish history. We find among the witnesses to one grant, the Bishop of Aberdeen, the Mormaers of Mar and Lennox, "Matadin the Brehon" (the "Shirra" of these days), and Domangart ferleginn (or reader) of Turbruad (Turriff). The local clans appear to have been the Clan Canan and the Clan Morgaunn, and the last grant in Gaelic was by Colbain Mormaer of Buchan, and Eva, daughter of Gaitnait, his wedded wife, and the chief of Clan Morgaunn, and was executed before certain named persons, "and the nobles of Buchan, all in witness hereof in Elan." It is followed by a Latin charter of King David, solemnly confirming the rights of the clerics of Deer, "as is written in their book, and as they have argued at Banff and sworn at Aberdeen."

King David died in 1153, and ere long a great change had come over the Scottish Church. The influence of Queen Margaret, and the wider life of Western Christendom, were forces as essentially reforming and progressive in the then condition of Scotland as was the Protestant Reformation 400 years later. The

old line of the purely Celtic Mormaers of Buchan came to an end in the person of Fergus, and his daughter Marjory married the head of the great Norman house of Comyn. The period between the accession of King Malcolm Canmore, and the death of King Alexander III., was one of increasing peace, of general prosperity, and of growing civilisation throughout Scotland. Not least did Buchan prosper under the firm and enlightened rule of its Earls, who combined the Celtic blood of the family of Fergus with the aptitude for government and wide knowledge of the world of their day which was the characteristic of the Norman nobles. Of the many ecclesiastical foundations which attested the interest taken by the Comyns in the religious welfare of the people, their favourite, and their largest, was the Abbey of Deer. The story of that Abbey is traced in this book by another hand. Suffice it here to say that the founder conferred on it broad lands, and was buried in it by his own desire. His grandson, John, Earl of Buchan, closed a series of benefactions with the patronage of the Church of Kin-Edar—"the last gift which the brethren of S. Mary were fated to receive from his name and lineage." The near neighbourhood of the Abbey is associated with two tragic incidents in the history of the family to whom it owed its being. On Aikey Brae there used to be some stones called "Cummin's Craig," marking the spot where one of the Earls was killed by a fall from his horse when hunting. It is said that his end had been foretold by the famous Thomas the Rhymer, at whose predictions he had scoffed, "whereupon the Seer of Ercildoun used these words, which were literally fulfilled:—"

" Though Thomas the Lyar thou callest me,
A sooth tale I shall tell to thee ;
By Aiky side thy horse shall ride,
He shall stumble and thou shalt fa',
Thy neck bane shall break in twa,
And maugre all thy kin and thee,
Thy own belt thy bier shall be."

The year 1308 was a terrible one for Buchan and the parish of Deer. The murder of the Red Comyn by King Robert in the Greyfriars Church, Dumfries, had made his powerful kinsmen implacable enemies of the Bruce. Having reduced his own counties of Carrick and Annandale, and cleared the English garrisons out of Galloway, King Robert came north to his estates in the Garioch, and won a signal victory at Inverurie over the Earl of Buchan, who retired into his own district. The King immediately despatched his brother, the fiery Edward, in pursuit, who, after encamping at Brucehill, again attacked the forces of the Earldom on Aikey Brae. There, in the centre of their flourishing domain, on the slopes overlooking the Abbey their family had founded, the Comyns made their last stand, and the cluster of tumuli near the foot of the hill are said to date from the battle. The Buchan men were broken and defeated with great slaughter, and the Earldom was devastated with fire and sword. So terrible was the chastisement that "for fifty years men spoke with

terror of the harrying of Buchan," and the oaks dug up in the mosses, bearing marks of being scathed with fire, are believed to be silent witnesses of the completeness of the vengeance of the angry King. Thus says Barbour :—

" He gart his men brin all Bouchane
Fra end til end, and sperit nane,
And heryit thame in sik maner,
That efter that weill fifty yeir
Men menyeit the herschip of Bouchane."

So complete was the destruction that it was said that "of a name that numbered three Earls, and more than thirty belted knights, there was no memorial left in the land save the orisons of the monks of Deer."

For the next 300 years the history of the parish is mainly that of the Abbey.

The Reformation placed the possessions of the Abbey in the hands of Robert Keith, son of the fourth Earl Marischal, who is known to history as the Commandator of Deer. He was in 1587 created Lord Altrie. Three years later a curious incident occurred. A nephew, Robert Keith of Benholm, seized the Abbey and held it for six weeks until he was dislodged by " Marischal and Lord Altrie and their company." It is recorded that he " skirmished with my Lord Altrie's soldiers, slew ane Macknab, and carried off all my lord's goods out of Mintlay," and the minutes of the Council of Aberdeen preserve a notice of " the sending out of fourtie hagbutteris to Deir " for " recovery of the hous of Deir." Probably the ruin of the Abbey buildings, then described as " the manor place of Deir, of auld callit the Abbey of Deir," made rapid progress in these contentions, and no trace remains of the tower said to have been built on the lands by the Keiths, on which, in defiance of the maledictions and vaticinations of the adherents of the old faith, they inscribed the haughty retort, also placed on Marischal College, Aberdeen, and on their house in Peterhead :—

" Thay baſſ said : Qubat say thay : Lat tbame say."

A stone upon the walls of the old church bears the arms and name of " George, Earl Marischal, Lord Keith, Lord Altrie, and Patron " of Deir, and must, from the Christian name, commemorate the Earl who founded Marischal College, or his descendant who died in 1694. It has been suggested that Old Deer was at one time a burgh of barony, but of this there is no evidence, though the name of the Wuddyhill recalls a time when capital punishment was locally administered.

There is little recorded of the parish during the struggles of the 17th century. It was fortunate in being far away from the march of armies, and escaping the ravages of civil war which fell so severely upon other parts of Aberdeenshire. The great house of the Keiths had succeeded to the local position held long before by the Comyns, and probably Old Deer contributed its proportion of " Earl Marischal's Buchan men," who fought at the Trot of Turriff and joined the southern Covenanters at various musters in Aberdeen. The Minister of Deer was then Mr. Robert Keith, who is recorded as one of " the three great

men called the 'Triumviri of Deer,' who controlled the actions of the local Presbytery, and of whom it was said that Mr. Duncan Forbes, New Pitsligo, was the one "who prayed all," Mr. N. Martin, Peterhead, the one "who acted all," but Mr. Keith was the one "who plotted (invented) all."

On 17th February, 1650, Gilbert Keith in Altrie was summoned by the minister before the Presbytery for his "relapse in malignancie in that he had been a soldier in the Engagement, after professing penitence for joining in James Graham's rebellion." Patrick Strachan of Kinaldie had also been "busy in the parish urging the Engagement," and the Earl Marischal's horse suffered very severely in the battle with Cromwell at Preston.

The Revolution of 1688 was not welcomed in the north-east of Scotland with the same feelings with which it was hailed in the south-west. Aberdeenshire had a lively recollection of the misfortunes during "The Troubles," and, unlike the westland counties, it had found the years that followed the Restoration a period of peace and prosperity. The year after the Restoration saw the passage by the Scottish Parliament of an Act which, on the preamble, "how necessary and convenient it would be for his Majestie's leidges that there be a frie mercat holden yearly within the town of Auld Deir or a litill above the same," authorised the Earl Marischal and his successors to have one, "beginning on the first Tuesday of July and to continue all the week," and to take "dues conform to ancient custim in lyk caces." Tradition, no doubt, gives a different origin for Aikey Fair, and records that it owed its inception to a packman slipping on the slippery stepping-stones across the Ugie, spreading his pack to dry on the hill-side, and collecting a crowd with whom he did such good business that he came back on the same day year after year. But whether Aikey Fair owed its beginning to the memory of S. Drostan, to the pedlar's pack, or to the Act of Parliament, it became a great institution, and these must have been palmy times for Old Deer, when it lasted for days, and when on the evening before it opened a hundred horsemen would cross the fords of the Ebrie and ride at the gallop to the famous market.

It was not till the year 1711, 23 years after the landing of William of Orange, that there occurred the incident known as "the Rabbling of Deer." Till then Mr. Keith, the Episcopal clergyman, had practically enjoyed the benefice, but the Presbytery having given "a Presbyterial call" to Mr. Gordon, son of the Provost of Aberdeen, accompanied by 70 horse and a small force of infantry, proceeded to induct him. They found the church guarded and the outer gate locked and barricaded with stones. For some time nobody appeared, but as soon as the constables proceeded to force the gate, "and the Presbitery and Mr. Gordon's men went after them into a narrow pass between the side-wall of one house and the gavell of another, and are all standing in a throng, the house tops fill full of people, with stones, &c., which they threw down upon them all standing together in the pass." Such is Wodrow's account. The Presbytery and the

troops were beat off, and the victors in the scuffle “goe into the house where some entertainment was prepared for the Presbytery and company by Mr. Gordon’s friends, and bring out all the meat and wine, and drink, as it is said, the Pretender’s health in the streets.” An amusing account of this riot was written in verse by Meston, who thus describes the parishioners of those days:—

“ The people who this land possesses,
Live quietly and pay their cesses ;
They fear the Lord and till the ground,
And love a creed that’s short and sound.

They are not fond of innovations,
Nor covet much new reformations ;
They are not for new paths, but rather
Each one jogs after his old father.”

The scuffle at Old Deer had, however, a far-reaching effect, for it was used as an argument with the Government of the day to grant toleration to the Episcopalian, and to reintroduce patronage into the Scottish Church, thus providing the *casus belli* which led to the secessions of the same, and the Disruption of the following century. “The Master of Saltoun told the Minister of Fraserburgh that the rabble of Old Deer procured the Acts of Toleration and Patronages.”

The rising of 1715 was the ruin of the ancient house of the Earl Marischal, but otherwise there is no record of any parochial incident connected with it. In that of 1745, it was different. “That rough partisan of the fallen cause, Gordon of Glenbucket,” says the “Statistical Account,” “extended his barbarities into the Lowlands, and as the Laird of Kinmundy was known to favour the opposite side, he showed some of his rude civilities to that house, particularly to the lady who was left in command of the garrison.” A door with a sword cut in it is said to be a relic of Glenbucket’s visit, but if all tales be true, the lady was equal to the occasion, and subsequently most active in assisting the Government troops. The Laird of Pitfour, afterwards a distinguished judge, acted as counsel for the unfortunate Jacobites at Carlisle, while the minister, Mr. Forbes, known as “old Pitney,” from his lairdship of Pitneycalder, is said to have officiated as chaplain to one of the Duke of Cumberland’s regiments at Culloden, and on his return to have preached a sermon in jack-boots, with his sword on the pulpit cushion. A sarcastic Jacobite ballad commemorates “Pitney’s preaching,” and describes him as warning his flock, that if “the Pretender” should be successful:—

“ Instead of a sleep in your pews,
You’ll be fashed with repeating the creed.”

The “Statistical Accounts” give us interesting views of the condition of the parish after successive intervals of nearly fifty years. In 1795, it was

increasing in population, and in the prosperity and comfort of its inhabitants. The old system of husbandry, with its distinctions of outfield and infield, had prevailed universally till about forty years before, but many persons had introduced a regular rotation of crops, which was still far from being the general practice. The breed of horses had been much improved: a large amount of spinning and knitting was done, and in 1783, a bleachfield and machinery had been set up at Stuartfield. Wages had risen, and of the servants it was said, "probably in no part of Scotland are they better used." The parishioners are described as "in general a decent, sober, charitable people." There were "two four-wheeled chaises and a hearse in the parish," and the restoration of the woods had been begun. The parish had suffered severely in



KINMUNDY HOUSE.

the bad year 1782, when 1,200 bolls of bere meal were imported, mostly by resident heritors, but had fully recovered. The later account, written by Mr. Morrison, prior to the Disruption of 1843, shewed that in the following 50 years great improvement had taken place "in the value, comfort, and aspect of the country." Old Deer was again the best wooded parish in Buchan. Pitfour led in this respect, but the proprietor of Aden had also "been at singular pains in raising fruit trees, and ornaimenting his place." "Mr. Ferguson of Kinmundy," it was however said, "is not much indebted to his ancestors for the care they took to enrich or beautify his estate in this way," but there, too, a beginning had been made. "The Turnip industry" had been established, and cattle were sent

to London by sea, the size having been increased by crossing with the Teeswater. Wool mills had been established at Aden and Millbreck, and the greatest change had been the formation of the turnpike roads, along which mail coaches passed and repassed daily. A stage coach also went direct from Old Deer to Aberdeen. The route taken by the turnpikes was unfortunate for the village of Old Deer, and was probably owing to the fact that the Fraserburgh one traverses at such length the lands of Kininundy and Pitfour, whose proprietors contributed largely to its formation.

Another fifty years have passed since. They have seen their own changes, some of a purely local character, and some national, in which our parish has participated. The turnpike roads have been superseded by the railway, and to some it is a matter of regret that the old name of Deer should have been superseded by that of Mintlaw as the railway and postal centre of the district. These years have seen an increased standard of comfort in our farm houses and steadings, and a general elevation of the condition of all classes of the community. Old Deer was well to the front among country parishes in the great volunteer movement for the defence of the country. Its education stands specially high through the liberality of one of its sons. Long may it enjoy a steadily increasing prosperity, and in regard to its best interests may the words of Saint Columba for ever hold good, that "Whosoever shall come against it shall not be many-yeared or victorious."

CHAPTER III.

The Stone Circles of Deir.

(By James Spence, Esq., The Institute, Peterhead.)

"WHAT mean these stones?" is a question that has been asked by hundreds of inquirers during the last three centuries, but has not as yet received an answer quite conclusive to all minds. It is not intended to attempt to give in this chapter a definite answer to the above question, or to the other questions that arise in connection with it, but rather to state the problem in a general way, and to indicate the nature of the various solutions offered by writers who hold widely different opinions regarding them.

The main questions are—Why were these circles erected? and,—By whom? In the discussion of these two questions, the minds of some of our foremost antiquaries have been occupied for generations. Volumes of controversy have issued from the press, and a mental heat has frequently been generated quite equal to, if not, indeed, greater than that which blazed up between Monk barns and Sir A. Wardour on the famous Pictish question.

The people of Deir may be said to live among stone circles, fragments of stone circles, and sites of circles that have been completely bared of their superstructures. Their late cultivated and highly-respected pastor, the Rev. James Peter, drew attention to those wonderful survivals of the old time, and contributed to the proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries on the subject. It is said that as many as a dozen are known to have existed in the parish within the memory of man. Now only four are left, and even these are in a dilapidated condition. They are the Parkhouse Circle, above Aikey Brae, the Loudon Circle, in the grounds of Pitfour, the Backhill of Auchmachar Circle, and the White Cow Circle, in the White Cow Wood, near Auchinachar. The last named may be dealt with first and set aside, as it belongs to quite a different class of circle from the others. They are megalithic circles, it is not.

The White Cow Circle, however, is worthy of something more than a passing notice. The stones composing it are very numerous and small, their greatest height not exceeding $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet. They are disposed in a ring about 40 feet in diameter, and they formed the fringe—a sort of low retaining wall—of a mound, which, according to Mr. Milne, Atherb, formerly occupied the whole area of the circle. Mr. Milne, speaking from personal knowledge, says that when the mound was cleared away, now a good many years ago, it was found to have covered a stone sarcophagus, or cist, still to be seen on its original site near the centre of

the circle. This definitely settles the character of the White Cow Circle. It formed the last resting-place of the bones or ashes of a chief, who, possibly, in his day and generation may have filled the high office of Morinaer of Buchan.

With regard to the other circles, and in answer to the first question,—Why were such structures raised? it is held by the present writer that the time-honoured traditional belief that they were reared as places of worship has a strong preponderance of evidence in its favour. But before dealing with this evidence, let us take a look at the general features and construction of these circles. They are very nearly of the same size, and they agree in having what has been called the Altar Stone at the south point of the circumference. This stone which forms a substantial table, as it were, is or was flanked on both sides by the tallest stones of the circle, pillar stones in fact. The stones, ranged round the circumference, decrease in height from south to north, the stones on the northern side of the circle being the smallest; this is a general characteristic of the circles of Aberdeenshire and Banffshire. The Backhill Circle, of which there is now very little left, is remarkable for the height of its pillar stones, 8 and 10 feet in height. The altar stone of this circle is also worthy of note, as in its present state it affords conclusive evidence that it could never have been used as an altar for burnt offerings. Many years since, a nephew of Mr. Still, the farmer, took it into his head, along with some companions, to light a Hallowe'en fire upon the surface of the stone, with the result that its mass was rent into fragments, which still lie in the heap they presented on the morning after the fire, showing that the stone had never undergone the ordeal by fire on any previous occasion. Whatever else may have been the use of this stone, it could not have been used as an altar, and, in all probability, this holds good of the table stones in other circles. It is much more likely that sacrifices were burnt in the centres of the circles, and this is in accordance with the traditional view. The Parkhouse circle presents a feature of interest, which may or may not be of much moment. The shadow of the table stone in the south, on the shortest day of the year, falls directly to the centre of the circle, and terminates there, and thus it may have determined the size of the circle, as forming a year-dial, may have served to fix with certainty the date of the great Yule festival of our ancestors, thus supporting the view entertained by not a few antiquaries of note, that many circles in all parts of the world bore an astronomical character, and were used for the purposes of our modern calendars.

Our stone circles were primarily temples, whether Druidical temples or not—that is another question. This proposition is supported by a great variety of considerations, as well as by no inconsiderable amount of evidence of a very direct character, but the space allowed for this paper will not admit of our entering upon these. The main argument advanced against this theory comes to this, that in many circles, perhaps in most, evidence of sepulture has been found, and that no direct evidence has been adduced of their having been places of worship, and

that, therefore, they were raised for sepulture and nothing else ! Surely this is too sweeping a conclusion. Just as well argue—if in the lapse of ages, the religion of to-day should disappear from the scene, if we can conceive such a change, and that nothing remained of it but ruins of our present churches scattered over the land, that these ruins were the remains of buildings that had been erected solely for sepulture, because in many of them evidence of sepulture was met with ! We of the present time consider it a natural and proper thing to inter our dead in our churches and around them, and so doubtless did our predecessors of the old time. Human nature is now in most respects what it was two thousand years ago. Another argument against our circles having been temples is their number. Why, it is asked, should there have been such an extraordinary number of these structures in such a limited area as Deir, if they were temples ? It is not denied that some of them may have been constructed for sepulture solely, very likely ; and such would take the sacred form of the temple, just as our mausoleums of to-day take the form of churches and chapels. Nothing more natural. But we must also take into account the fact that in ancient times there would have been in any system of religion prevalent, perhaps as strong a tendency to break up into divisions, sects, and denominations as is the case now. The Parkhouse may have been the Parish Church of the old time, the Loudon the Free Church, and the Backhill the U.P. Why not ? Yet the number may be accounted for, and all may have been places of sepulture, if Deir were the seat of authority and if all the great rulers died in the neighbourhood.

Let us pass now to the second question—By whom were our circles erected ? There are three possible answers to this question. They may have been erected by the race that occupied this island prior to the coming in of the Celtic tribes, by the Basque Picts, if Mr John Gray, B.Sc., be correct in his inferences. They may be the work of Celtic hands, or, they may have been constructed by the various Teutonic tribes, Angles, Saxons, Danes, and Norse, who during the 5th, 6th, and 7th centuries, succeeded in making themselves masters of the greater part of Britain. This last supposition is the one favoured by the present writer. The chief reasons only for holding this opinion can be here given. The first reason for rejecting the Celtic origin of the circles, and, of course, also any prior origin, lies in this that the Romans held possession of South Britain for nearly four centuries, and had a thorough knowledge of it, and yet all the Roman authors who write about Britain are dumb as to such structures, even when showing an intelligent interest in the manners, customs, and religion of the native inhabitants. The only rational way of accounting for this silence is that those wonderful structures—Stonehenge and Avebury—were not then in existence.

Again, on the Continent of Europe, similar structures are found in all Teutonic countries, and very rarely, if at all, in those countries the basis of whose population is Celtic. A like distribution holds good in Britain.

Another point. It has been already observed that a great festival was held

at the winter solstice, known as jol, jul, yule, yeel ; both festival and name are purely Teutonic. The Celtic festivals held during the winter half-year were Hallowe'en and New Year's Day (March 10). The Celtic language continued to be spoken in Buchan down to the 13th century, and there still the observance of Hallowe'en lingers in some districts. But Buchan must have been mainly Scandinavian in population long before that century. Hence we have here still the Yule festival in the guise of Christmas, with which Christian festival not a few heathen observances have always been connected. When Christmas took the place of Yule among the Teutons of Buchan, the old name was retained. In the more purely Celtic parts of Britain the word Yule is unknown. The Celtic names for Christmas are all modifications of the Latin, *Dies natalis*. The word Yule is found in use in certain districts. Stone circles are found in the same districts.

Another ground for regarding stone circles as of Teutonic origin is to be found in early Celtic literature, which at the same time indicates very decidedly that they were places of worship. To the Celt these circles were the work of foreign hands, and the symbols of a foreign faith. As an example of what may be found in Celtic literature bearing upon this matter, take the following from the poem of *Carric Thura* :—Fingal, King of Morven, the embodiment of the Celtic heroic and national spirit, is on a voyage to Orkney with the object of overturning the power of the King of Lochlin (Denmark) in the islands. “Rotha’s Bay received the ship.” *Rotha* may be translated *the island of the Circle*, and it is well known that the largest of all our Scottish circles stands on the mainland of Orkney. “A rock bends along the coast, with all its echoing wood. On the top is the Circle of Lodin [Gaelic for *Odin*], the mossy stone of power,” and according to Dr. Clark’s version—

“ The moon was red and dull in the east ;
 Came down a blast from the height ;
 On its wings was the semblance of a man—
 Cruth-Lodin wan, upon the plain . . .
 He came to his own abode,
 His black spear useless in his hand ;
 His red eye like the fire in the sky,
 Like thunder on the hills his voice.”

Fingal addresses him thus :—

“ Why to my presence come, thou shadowy one,
 Thy semblance vain as are thine arms ?
 Is thy dusky form a terror unto me,
 Thou phantom of the Circles of Lodin ? ”

After some further heroic talk on both sides, the Celt attacks the “black spectre of the Circles of Lodin,” and sends him shrieking into the darkness of night. In another passage Fingal is represented as stealing by night upon two Scandinavian heroes in their own country, and attacking them while engaged in consulting

their god at his "many sons of power" in a circle. There are other allusions to the Circles of Odin throughout the poems. And thus we see that the Celtic heroes of Morven did not worship in such circles, or revere the gods to whom they were dedicated.

It is not claimed that the foregoing discussion of this most interesting subject is exhaustive or conclusive, but it indicates, as briefly as possible, the position the writer has arrived at, after a considerable amount of study of the various views held and the grounds for them. These conclusions are, that our circles were in the first place temples, if the term may be applied to structures of such a rude character; that their origin is posterior to the Roman occupation of Britain; that consequently they should never have been styled Druidic, but rather Odinic or Teutonic temples; and that the so-called Altar Stones never were and never could have been used for burnt offerings.



STANDING STONES AT PARKHOUSE.

CHAPTER IV.

The Patron Saint of Deer—Saint Drostan.

(By the Rev. James Cooper, D.D., East Church of S. Nicholas, Aberdeen).

IT was in the reign of the chivalrous King James IV. that the first Scottish printer, Walter Chepman, set up his printing press in Edinburgh, and the first book which issued from it (1509 or 1510) was the *Breviary of Aberdeen*. The distinguishing features of the new service-book were its “addicions and legendis of Scottis Sanctis, now gaderit and ekit by ane Reverend father in God, the King’s traist consaloure Willeame, Bисope of Abirdene”—the great and good Bishop William Elphinstone, to whose enlightened munificence we owe the foundation of our Northern University. It was intended that the *Breviary of Aberdeen*, with a Missal and other office-books to correspond, should be “usit generaly within al the Realme of Scotland”—superseding the books of the Use of Sarum, or Salisbury, which for well-nigh three centuries had occupied our Scottish churches. Not that any theological distaste had yet arisen for either the doctrine or the ceremonial of those books, but the study of Scottish history had begun, and one of its first results was this demand for a fuller recognition of the national saints in the services of the national Church.

In the Aberdeen *Breviary*, accordingly, full honour was done to the Saint of Deer. S. Drostan was regarded as one of the chief of S. Columba’s coadjutors in the planting of the Church of Scotland. Therefore his Feast, which was celebrated on the 14th of December, was marked by every feature which the ritual of the time reserved for the great ones of the Kalendar. The *Magnificat* was introduced and followed by a doubly rhyming antiphon, the metre of which, as well as its matter, may thus be rendered:—

Saint Drostan was a Christian,
To faith he added constancy ;
His life, so clear, to Gon was dear,
E’en from his earliest infancy.

Him venerate, and aye entreat
With fervent pray’r continual,
That by his aid, we may be led
To share his joys celestial.

His life was then narrated in Nine Lessons, which told how “Blessed Drostan, sprung of the Royal stock of the Scots, having heard even in his boyish years the

mysteries of the Incarnation and the Passion of our LORD, when he had come to mature age, sought to devote himself to the service of Almighty GOD. His parents, therefore, handed him over to his uncle, S. Columba, then resident in Ireland, to be educated; and he afterwards assumed the monastic habit at Dalquongale (Holywood). On the death of the Abbot, he was elected in his place; and there for a season he remained and studied by his life and doctrine greatly to benefit his subject monks. Some time thereafter, not deserting the care of the flock entrusted to him, but committing himself to CHRIST, the Supreme Shepherd, he betook himself to a secluded desert in the parts of Scotland, and there led the life of a hermit in a place called Glenesk, where he built a church. According to that saying in the Gospel, he left all for CHRIST, not caring to retain that earthly dignity and royal honour to which he had a hereditary right; but renouncing the earthly kingdom and the estate of a prince among men, so that he might flee the service of Antichrist. A certain priest, named Symon, who was blind, received sight through Drostan's merits. Despising the world, he became the friend of CHRIST; loving the wilderness, he triumphed over the old Enemy, invoking ever the Divine aid against the hidden snares of Satan. The higher the Saint attained, the more fierce were the assaults of the cunning foe; and hard was the martyrdom of compunction and maceration which in heart and body the Saint endured, lest at any time he should yield consent to the Devil; and because, all along the way of this present life, he steadily pursued the reward of the life to come, he at last was considered worthy to enter that everlasting life, and having finished his course in all holiness and purity, he departed to the LORD. The bones of this most holy confessor, Drostan, are preserved in a stone tomb Aberdowyr (Aberdour), where, through his merits, many persons, worn out with divers diseases, are restored to health."

Other old writers, cited in the *Acta Sanctorum* (11th July, for the Bollandists were misled as to his Day), yield us a few additional details, not always consistent with each other. Fordun describes him as the grandson of King Aidan—the King of the Scots whom S. Columba anointed; John Major makes him, apparently, that King's brother, or brother-in-law; Bishop Leslie, whom Wilson follows, calls him the uncle of King Aidan; while an author, who seems to be better informed than any of them, Sirinus, tells us that "S. Drostan, who must not be passed over, was born and educated in Ireland, like his sister, Fedhelmia, the mother of King Aidan, and the daughter of Fetteclimius, a nobleman sprung from the Royal stock of Connaught, as is recorded in the book of the mothers of kings and illustrious men of Ireland, and in the life of S. Cornac, Abbot. There is," he adds, "in the Diocese of Elphin, a parish church called after an Saint, Kill Drostan."

It is strange that none of these writers, nor Bishop Elphinstone himself—though the manuscript containing it lay in the great Abbey of his own diocese—seem to have known the far more vivid and interesting,—and, probably far more

ancient—notice of our Saint, which came to light in the *Book of Deer*. It is as follows:—

“Columcille and Drostān, son of Cosgrach, his pupil, came from Hi (Iona), as God had shewn to them, unto Abberdabboir (Aberdour), and Bede the Pict was Morinaer of Buchan before them, and it was he that gave that town in freedom for ever from Morinaer and Toisech. They came after that to the other town (Deer), and it was pleasing to Columcille because it was full of God’s grace, and he asked of the Mormaer, to wit, Bede, that he should give it to him; and he did not give it, and a son of his took an illness after refusing the clerics, and he was nearly dead. After this the Mormaer went to entreat the clerics that they should make prayer for the son, that health should come to him; and he gave in offering to them from Cloch in tiprat to Cloch pette meic garneit. They made the prayer, and health came to him. After that Columcille gave to Drostān that town, and blessed it, and left as his word, ‘Whosoever should come against it, let him not be many-yeared or victorious.’ Drostān’s tears came on parting from Columcille. Said Columcille, let DEAR [i.e. Tears] be its name henceforward.” The comment of Montalembert is apt:—“These old saints, in their wild and laborious career, loved each other with a passionate tenderness which is certainly not the least touching feature in their character, and which places an extinguishable light upon their heads, amid the darkness of the legends. . . . *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*—Ps. cxxvi., 5.” The eloquent Frenchman is, however, somewhat hasty when he speaks of “The great Abbey which lasted a thousand years upon that spot, always retaining the name.” S. Drostān’s monastery occupied a different site—either where the Parish church now stands, or a little nearer Crichie. As a church his mission has lasted to the present day: as a monastery, after continuing upwards of six hundred years (from before 597, when S. Columba died, till 1218), it was superseded by the Cistercian Abbey of S. Mary, whose ruins remain on the meadow of Pitfour. Yet Montalembert is so far justified,—there can be little doubt that the memory of S. Columba’s curse, if it could not preserve effete institutions in the old form, nevertheless prevailed to save the endowment from appropriation to mere private and selfish purposes, and to preserve it for the service of learning and religion. It was in no small measure due to it that, in the reformation of the Twelfth century, the Celtic monastery gave place to the Cistercian; and that, in the reformation of the Sixteenth century, the endowments which were taken from the Abbey, went to the support of the Marischal College and University of Aberdeen.

Besides the churches of Deer and Aberdour, which he founded in conjunction with S. Columba, those of Insch, Rothiemay, Aberlour (formerly called after him Scurdustan), and Alvie, were dedicated in S. Drostān’s honour, and may be taken as attesting his diligence in planting missions at various points throughout or beyond the province where he had gained a footing. Dedications to him at

Halkirk and Canisbay in Caithness suggest that he may have attempted to evangelise also the northern shores of the Moray Firth; while his connection with Glenesk referred to in the *Breviary of Aberdeen* is confirmed by the dedication to him of two churches in that quarter, Lochlee and Edzell. The range of his activity was thus very considerable. The light he kindled at so many points still shines. It is only just and right that we should recall his services, and reverence his memory. For, as the Apostle reminds us, “*Though we have ten thousand instructors in CHRIST, yet have we not many fathers.*”



ALUINN ALDEN.

CHAPTER V.

The Book of Deir.

THE Book of DEIR is a small manuscript volume, in parchment, of over eighty folios, for the most part closely written on both sides. It contains the whole of the Gospel of S. John, and the earlier chapters of the synoptic Gospels—the first six and part of the seventh chapter of S. Matthew, the first four and part of the fifth of S. Mark, the first three and part of the fourth of S. Luke—all according to the text of the Vulgate, but as a manuscript of the New Testament Scriptures it has no features of note, and has, therefore, no special value. It contains also a fragment of a service for the visitation of the sick, with a rubric in Gaelic, the Apostles' Creed, and a brief charter of David I. to the clerics at Deir, referred to in an earlier chapter, and translated in Appendix II.—all in Latin. It has characteristic Celtic illuminations and figures, and those skilled in such matters believe that the handwriting is of the ninth century. The scribe had a human heart, and some heavy burden of his own to bear, for he closes his manuscript with a pathetic cry for himself—“ Be it on the conscience of everyone, in whom shall be for grace the booklet with splendour, that he give a blessing on the soul of the wretch who wrote it.” The BOOK was, undoubtedly, the property of the Celtic monastery of Deir, and it thus takes us back a thousand years. There is a high degree of probability that it passed, with other ecclesiastical possessions, into the keeping of the Cistercian Abbey of Deir. Its after-history can only be guessed at. This, however, is known for certain—in 1697 it formed part of a collection of MSS. belonging to Dr. Moore, Bishop of Norwich, afterwards, from 1707-1714, Bishop of Ely, and in 1715, through the liberality of George I., who bought Moore's library of 30,755 volumes, it was presented with the library to the University of Cambridge. It lay, unnoticed, for almost a century and a half. In 1860 Mr. Henry Bradshaw, the University Librarian, perceived its importance, and made public his discovery. It was admirably edited, with a wealth of illustrative material, and published in 1869, for the Spalding Club, by Dr. John Stuart, the secretary.

The University of Cambridge possesses among the Gale MSS. other documents once the property of the Abbey of Deir. There is a copy of the ordinances for the better government of Cistercian Monasteries in Scotland, of date 1531; there is a relaxation of those rules by Robert Reid, Abbot of Kinloss, and Walter, Abbot of Glenluce, likewise an agreement between the Abbot of Deir, John Innes, and the brethren, with consent of the Lords Visitors, and a deed of augmentation by the said Abbot John, increasing the daily allowance of each monk. These

MSS. cannot be traced further back than to John Aubrey, the celebrated antiquary, whose name is on the copy of the Cistercian ordinances. Aubrey died in 1697, the year in which the *BOOK OF DEIR* came into the possession of Bishop Moore.*

But the importance of the *BOOK OF DEIR* does not consist in any feature as yet mentioned. On the margins and blank pages, in two different hand-writings, are brief notes in the Gaelic language. These entries give the legend of the foundation of the Celtic monastery by Columcille and Drostan, translated in Dr. Cooper's chapter on our Patron Saint, and record various grants of land and concessions of privilege by the Celtic rulers of the district to the monks at Deir. The only entry about property, which is in Latin, is the charter of David I. All the other notices, are of earlier gifts from the coming of Saint Columba, possibly in A.D. 580, for this is the mean date between his arrival in Iona and his death. The grants thus extend over a period of close upon six hundred years, and the writing of the notices may range from the ninth century, when the MS. was transcribed, until A.D. 1153. The record shows that the monks had a struggle to keep their own, but it shows also that in the main they succeeded, and that they were able to get confirmation in the reign of one of the most pious of Scottish Sovereigns, "that sair sanct for the crown," who rightly thought the spiritual well-being of his people of more account than royal pomp and pleasure. The place-names of the Book are discussed in Appendix II., and their bearing upon the distribution of the parish territory is given in the chapter which describes the successive generations of the lords of the soil.

The *BOOK OF DEIR* is at once a product and a symbol of the Celtic Church in Scotland. It recalls those features which Dr. Skene has so clearly described in his valuable work on Celtic Scotland. Celtic monasteries were, as he says, Christian colonies among Pagan tribes. They were, practically, the entire Church organization. The great figures and energetic leaders of Christian life were not Bishops, but Abbots, and to the Abbots even Bishops might be subject, although their higher rank in the ecclesiastical order was admitted. These colonies set themselves to do battle with the ferocity, anarchy, and impurity of the heathen population, and, wherever there was a monastery, there there was a centre of light, and peace, and reverence.

In Northern Pictland, in the very heart of which Deir was situated, the Columban method of shaving the head and of reckoning Easter continued for one hundred and twenty years after the Saint's death, until in A.D. 717, Nectan, the King of the Picts, expelled all monks who would not conform to Roman usage on these points. Nectan seems to have been an earlier Saint Margaret in respect of conformity to Rome.

* For the information concerning the Gale MSS. I am indebted to the courtesy of the Rev. Robert Sinker, D.D., Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge.—A. L.

To these great Celtic colonies of monks, there succeeded, in some districts, hermits, each inhabiting a solitary cell; and the hermits, strange though it may appear, were often, in spite of their hermit life, associated in communities. These hermits are known as the CULDEES, about whose name and work there has been so much controversy. While these hermit clerics prevailed, there sprang up, under the influence of the Church of Rome, priests who were not monks—a secular clergy as they are called—and these secular priests began to take a prominent part in the work of Christianizing the people. As a consequence, the Celtic monasteries ceased to be centres of influence, and fell gradually into the hands of laymen, who became nominally monks and abbots in order to get hold of monastic property.

Now these Culdees, who gave so much trouble at St. Andrews and at Monymusk, are unknown at Deir. The monks seem either to have been latitudinarian or submissive, for neither in the BOOK nor in any other record do we find a single trace of the hermit stage of Scottish Christianity in this region.

In Pictland, until the reign of King Giric, A.D. 878-887, Church property was subject to the same exactions as other property, and the stress laid, in the marginal notices, upon grants of land which are free from the King's share, or the Mormaer's and Toisech's share, as well as the strong statement in one notice, "Cainnech and Domnall and Cathal, mortified all these offerings to God and to Drostan from beginning to end, in freedom from mormaer and toisech to the day of judgment," shows an emphatic assertion of rights which might otherwise be open to question. Only in one notice does the distinctively Roman influence appear, and that is in a grant by Gartnait, son of Cainnech. He and "Ete, daughter of Gille Michel, gave Pett Mac Cobrig for the consecration of a Church to Christ and Peter the Apostle, and to Columcille and to Drostan, free from all the exactions, with the gift of them, to Cormac, Bishop of Dunkeld, in the eighth year of David's reign," *i.e.* A.D. 1132.

It is possible that there is little question of S. Peter because there was early much heartiness in submission to Rome. Where there is much of the thing, there is commonly little of the name. Perhaps also there was an element of Buchan tenacity in the members of the Clan Canan (the Dog Clan) and of the Clan Morgainn (a branch of the Clan Mackay), who formed the population. In any wise, the original Celtic character of the settlement at Deir, and a distinctively clerical rule, were maintained until the whole country became, with great goodwill, an integral part of the great Latin Communion, acknowledging the sway of the Pope. There was doubtless communion with Rome before, and acknowledgment of the supremacy of the See of S. Peter, but neither practically nor in theory was the Scottish Church so vitally connected with Rome as in the centuries after the coming of Margaret, Saint and Queen.

CHAPTER VI.

The Abbey of Deir.

IN the latter half of the twelfth century, and the beginning of the thirteenth, a peaceful revolution took place in Scotland. The country had been consolidated under one sovereign, and the feudal system of the Normans and the ecclesiastical discipline of Rome absolutely prevailed over early Celtic tradition and usage. Many of the great Norman leaders became Scottish noblemen and territorial princes, and at the same time champions and benefactors of the Roman Catholic Church. For in spite of many weaknesses and frequent acts of violence, these men really believed the religion which they professed, and they made



WINDOWS OF THE ABBEY CHURCH.

substantial sacrifices for its advancement. Divine worship was a reality to their souls, and everything relating to it had need to be of the best in form and spirit. They also cherished the belief that what had once been dedicated to holy uses, if by any chance it had been alienated, should, as speedily as possible, revert to its sacred function. When, in A.D. 1210, William Cumyn Great Justiciary of Scotland, being then a widower and in his forty-seventh year, married Marjorie only child and heiress of Fergus, the last Celtic Earl of Buchan, he early realised

his duty to the people on his lands, and at the same time he acknowledged the right of the Church to her inheritance. He founded and endowed the Cistercian **Abbey** of S. Mary in the Vale of Deir, about three quarters of a mile from the old Celtic **foundation**, and on the opposite bank of the Ugie. The date is given variously, 1218 and 1219. It was colonised from Kinloss in Moray, whence, in 1217, Culross, the ancient **seat** of S. Serf* on the Forth, had also been colonised. The three monks from Kinloss—**Hugh, Arthur, and John**, settled in their new home, and we may count it certain that as a **convent** they entered upon possession of part of the Celtic patrimony. Some portion went probably to the Abbey of Arbroath.

What was life in a Cistercian monastery? “At two in the morning the great bell was rung, and the monks immediately arose and hastened from their dormitory, along the dark cloisters, in solemn silence to the church. A single small lamp, suspended from the roof, gave a glimmering light just sufficient to show them their way through the plain unornamented building. After short private prayers they began matins, which took them about two hours. The next service—lauds—did not commence till the first glimmer of dawn was in the sky, and thus, in winter at least, a considerable interval occurred, during which the monk’s time was his own. He went to the cloister, and employed it in reading, writing, or meditation, according to his inclination. He then devoted himself to various religious exercises till nine, when he went forth to work in the fields. At two he dined, at nightfall all assembled to vespers, and at six or eight, according to the season, finished the day with compline, and passed at once to the dormitory.”†

The monks were not only landlords of their own estates, they were practical teachers of agriculture, architecture, and gardening. They were the school-masters and authors of the age as well. They lived a life apart, often a life of severe asceticism; but it was that the rest of men might live better lives, and with more wisdom and happiness.

The **ABBOT** of Deir was a mitred Abbot, and as such had a seat in the Scottish Parliament, but the House continued subject to the House of Kinloss, from the brethren of which the Abbot was often chosen. The monastic buildings, like those of all Cistercian foundations which remained true to the ideal of Stephen Harding, seem to have been plain even to meanness. In a sentence of the “*Chronicle of Melrose*,” to be quoted by and by, there is a strain of contempt for the dwelling as well as for the character of the monks of Deir. A ground plan

* S. Serf probably belonged to this district, for the Gaelic tract on the Mothers of the Saints, quoted by Dr. Skene, describes him as ‘son of Proc, King of Canaan, of Egypt.’ It is more reasonable to think of Proc as a ruler of the *Clan Canan*.

† *Usus Ordinis Cisterciensis, pars. iii.*, as rendered by Mr. Cotter Morrison in his “*Life and Times of S. Bernard*,” p. 18.

of the Abbey Church, with the immediate surroundings, which was made in 1789, for the late James Ferguson, Esq., M.P., of Pitfour, and which is here given on a reduced scale, will well reward careful study, and will show better than many pages of description the home-surroundings of these medieval teachers of the Christian faith and life.

References to Ground Plan of Abbey Building made in 1789, for James Ferguson, Esq. of Pitfour, M.P., by Mr. Whyte.

A A A A A.—The principal lodging where at least it is supposed the kitchen, refectory, and dormitories had been.

B B.—Two arched cellars, one of them entire.

C C C C C.—Said to be priests' or monks' lodgings.

D.—A burial-place.

E.—The School-house.

F.—The Church.

G G G.—The Altar-pieces, choir, and transept.

H.—A large square or piazza, where a covered walk is supposed to have been, and garden ground in the middle.

J.—The corn-mills.

K K K.—Office-houses.

L M L.—The barn and kilns.

M.—The porter's lodgings.

N.—The present tacksman's house, where a row of houses stood, one of which had been a smith's shop.

O.—A house occupied by the tacksman as a barn.

P.—Direction in which the lead pipes were laid.

Q Q.—Run of the water from the mill, covered with long stones within the old walls.

R R R R.—The old wall, enclosing buildings and garden ground, extent 8½ acres.

S.—Burying-ground.

T.—Supposed superior burying-place.

U.—Probably Chapter Hall.

V.—Well or cistern.

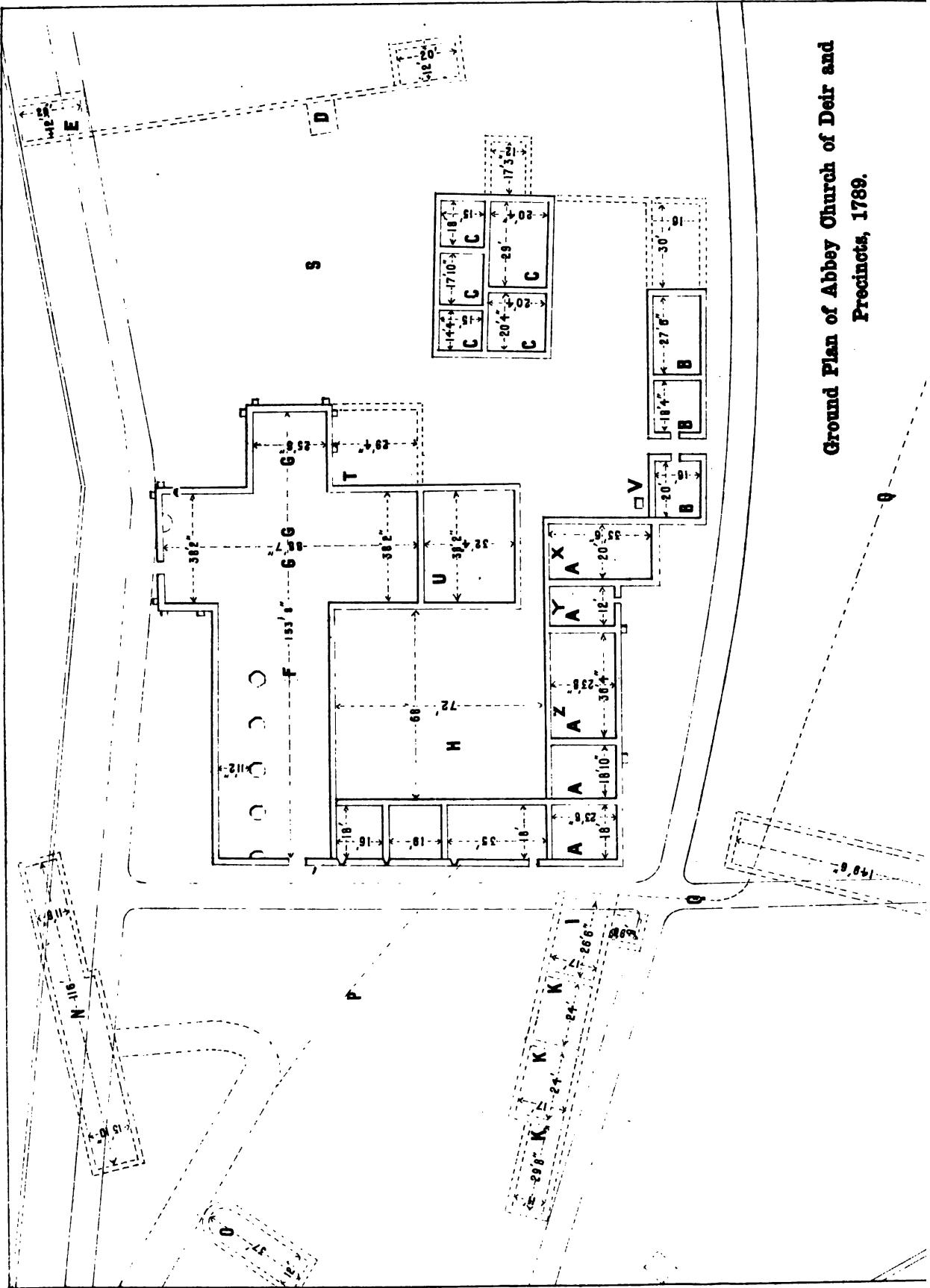
W.—A fine spring.

Thickness of walls in 1820, from 2½ to 4 feet.

Further remarks.—From analogy and consideration of buildings of a similar kind, as B B for certain was two vaulted cellars, the well or cistern so near them, so the kitchen must also be near this, and perhaps X A had been the kitchen, Y A lobby and stair-case, Z A the refectory, and above these the dormitory; but as the refectory seems to be small in proportion to others, it might have been on the second floor, and the dormitory on the third. The church was paved with dressed granite, and in some places with Dutch tile pavement. The cornices, pillars, and ornaments of stone are all of red freestone from Arbroath.

In the early years of the Abbey there was a rapid succession of Abbots, and it is not easy to make a consistent narrative from the contradictory information which is available. Between A.D. 1219 and 1234, there are no less than five Abbots mentioned, the most outstanding being Walter, the fifth in the succession, who was frequently an arbiter in disputes about property in the north country, and who must, therefore, have been held in high estimation for his sagacity and judicial temper. In A.D. 1234, Hugh, the Prior of Melrose, was chosen Abbot. But he was an old man, and the change of air, possibly also of monastic society,

Ground Plan of Abbey Church of Deir and
Precincts, 1789.





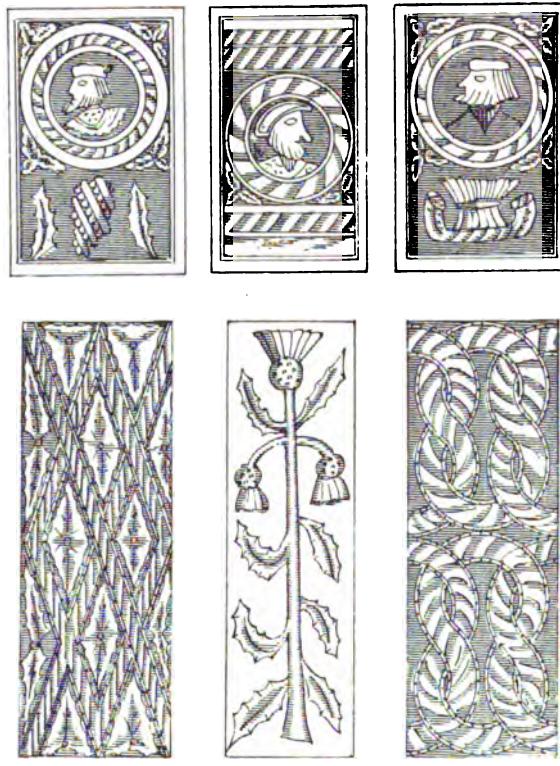
was trying. He resigned within the year, in part from bodily weakness and in part because of the rigour of the climate. He returned to Melrose, took up his old office of Prior, and not long after "faithfully passed to the LORD."

In A.D. 1262 came one of those scandals which are peculiar to no form of Christianity, and which have most unfairly been regarded as typical of monasteries. A high ideal has always its penalties, for when the first enthusiasm of religion passes away, a self-indulgent nature is apt to sink to very low depths. Henry, formerly Prior of Kinloss, was deposed after a ten years' tenure of office. The ground of his deposition has been erased from the "Chronicle of Melrose." There was strict supervision among the Cistercians, and even the Abbot of Citeaux, who was head of the entire order, was under the surveillance of four other Abbots, and after four admonitions, he might, on their report, be deposed by a Chapter of the order. To this unhappy Abbot Henry there succeeded Adam of Smailholm, a monk of Melrose. He seems to have been selected because of the sincerity of his devotion, and he must have been of an earnest and eager nature. An unworthy Abbot had doubtless left a careless convent, and Abbot Adam strove to bring the monks into subjection. Perhaps he lacked tact or patience, perhaps he was too old to take kindly to new surroundings and a troublesome flock. "He resigned of his own will, after five years, and returned to Melrose, preferring the courteous charm of the brethren of Melrose, whom he had known aforetime, to the rule of a sty of monks in Deir, whose religious zeal he had never been able to know by (any) true experience." The word translated "sty"—*tugurrium monachorum*—seems to involve scorn, both of the humble cloister and of the unworthy brethren. Whether the scorn was Adam's, or the Chronicler's, we do not know. Yet scorn is always unwise. Perhaps they were not quite so bad as the high-minded and sensitive Abbot Adam supposed. They had at least a sense of humour, and chose an Abbot who would not pitch the pipe too high.

ABBOT ADAM WAS SUCCEDED BY HUGH, THE CELLARER OF DEIR.

No details are preserved of the sway of Abbot Hugh, nor for some time can the scanty information which has reached us shed light amidst the darkness. The closing quarter of the thirteenth century was a calamitous time in Scotland, and the province of Buchan and the Abbey of Deir were drawn into the national struggle in a most pronounced way. On the 12th March, 1286, King Alexander III. was killed by a fall from his horse at Kinghorn in Fife, and the heir in the direct succession was his grand-daughter, known in Scottish history as the Maid of Norway. She was betrothed to Prince Edward of England, in conformity with the Treaty of Brigham, on the 18th July, 1290, and among the higher clergy assembled there, was the Abbot of Deir. Had that young girl lived to become the queen of the son of Edward Longshanks, the after history of England and Scotland had been a happier tale to read. But the death of the Maid of Norway brought on the well-known disputed succession, civil war, and war with

England, which ended in the triumph of King Robert the Bruce. The Abbot of Deir and his convent, as was natural, were staunch supporters of the Comyns, for the Comyns were royal in munificence as well as in ambition, and they had been liberal patrons of their own Abbey. It is not to be wondered then that BRICE, Abbot of Deir, swore fealty to King Edward of England on the 28th August, 1296. He swore with his fellows upon the Holy Gospel in these words:—"I will be faithful and loyal and I will show fidelity and loyalty to King Edward, King of England, and to his heirs, with life and limb and land in honour against all people who may live and die, and I shall never bear arms for any one, nor be in



SPECIMEN OF WOOD-CARVING OF ABBEY CHURCH

counsel or band against him nor against his heirs in any event which may arise." The defeat of the Comyns by Edward Bruce in 1308, has already been touched upon in the introductory sketch by Mr. Ferguson. There is still a Bruce-hill in New Deer.

King Robert, in spite of his act of sacrilege, was a loyal national churchman; and well he might, for in all the tangled story of the Scottish War of Independence the Scottish clergy and the Scottish common folk divide the honours. Their courage and public spirit never failed. The monks of Deir were taken into favour, and confirmed anew in their privileges and possessions, and we

know that in the harrying of Buchan their part of the Comyn heritage was not spared. Abbot Michael of Deir was a member of the Parliament of Cambuskenneth, 6th November, 1314, when the conquerors took severe measures against the friends of England within the realm. The same Abbot came to a friendly agreement with the laird of Fetherat. He gave up all claim to the park of Badorosky, in so far as it lay on the north side of the burn, and he received the lands of greater Auchrathy, on condition of his holding them of the convent, and paying two merks yearly.

A glimpse of the Abbey and its fortunes comes to us by way of Avignon. Gregory XI., in 1371 A.D., the year after his enthronement as Pope, confirmed the Abbey of Deir in the patronage of Foveran and Kynnedor. Confirmation is granted "because the said monastery, by reason of various harryings and other most numerous forms of oppression in time of wars, which had broken out in those parts was exceedingly despoiled and diminished in its resources." There is to be a vicar at Foveran, and also a chaplain in the Cathedral at Aberdeen. The resident vicar is to have a stipend of ten merks usual money, a house and two acres of land. The chaplain is to have six merks a year, with a decent gown for use in the choir. The vicar of Kynnedor is to have one hundred shillings a year, a competent house, with a suitable glebe, and the chaplain is to have his decent gown and five merks a year. The payments are to be made one-half at Candlemas, and the other half at the Feast of S. John the Baptist—a most becomming day for payment to loyal Scotsmen as the anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn.

Throughout the fourteenth century there is nothing special to record until towards the close. About the year 1390 the Lord Abbot of Deir acquired a town house in the Foty Gate in Aberdeen from Laurence of Foty, a burgess there, for a merk a year, secured upon the lands of Fechil on the Ythan. Much the same lack of incident marks the fifteenth century. The Abbot and his convent lead their lives, make good landlords, and acquire such privileges as they may, among them a grant from King Robert III. (A.D. 1390-1406) of "all the customs of all the wool of their own growing from their own sheep, as well as from the teind wool of the Parish Kirk of Dere, so long as the customs from this source do not exceed twenty sacks of wool." On September 17th, 1476, John Wormot, "a procurator til a venerable father William, Abbot of Dere," appears against John the Vaus "for wrangous intromitting with seven barrell of salmon." John the Vaus, however, repelled the Abbot's claim satisfactorily.

When we reach the 16th century, there are signs at Deir, as elsewhere, of the decrepitude which had come over the representatives and institutions of the old religion. Prosperity had brought worldliness, and excessive wealth had corrupted the ecclesiastical government, for great posts in the Church, with the revenues attaching to them, were too often channels for providing luxury, and not, as they should have been, positions of service where men might foster character and faith, and wisdom and patriotism. The service of the Church, with the

connivance of the higher Church authorities, was sacrificed to the needs and to the greed of those who never thought of religion at all. Ninian Winzet's denunciations are more weighty, because they are more measured, than those of John Knox, and they show the true grief of a good Catholic, who had the fear of God. The higher clergy in Scotland were her ablest as well as her richest men, and in spite of grave faults, they were also her most patriotic statesmen, but they did not see that, as their original title to obedience and to power was based on moral and spiritual service, they could not long retain loyalty and wealth on merely legal grounds. A scoundrel earl—and Scotland in the 15th and 16th centuries had many choice specimens—who has no merit whatever, and who does nothing useful, may inherit on a legal title. But, unless in the worst ages, a Bishop or an Abbot must justify his wealth by his character and his services. And it is well that it should be so. Nevertheless one must be just to the old religion. There was true desire for reformation. The better men were not blind to the abounding evils. Yet until the hurricane of the Reformation burst upon them, they were criminally supine, painfully tolerant, and they invariably did the right thing in too easy-going a way.

Every aspect of the period immediately preceding the Reformation is brought before us in one of the documents* already referred to as in the possession of the University of Cambridge. It is of date A.D. 1531, the 18th year of the reign of James V., who, with reference to monks and monasteries had said to Sir Ralph Sadler, "God forbid that if a few be not good, for them all the rest should be destroyed. Though some be not, there be a great many good, and the good may be suffered, and the evil must be reformed: and ye shall hear that I shall help to see it redressed in Scotland, by God's grace, if I brook life."

This vigorous call to amendment is interesting and valuable, in view of the upheaval which was all but taking place. But Symon, Abbot of Charleroi (or Charollais, I know not which), did not make his inspection in person. He sent his orders to Deir, but he wrote them at Cupar-in-Angus, "for the guidance and comfort of the Abbot and Convent of the Monastery of Deir, to which monastery, indeed, for many reasonable causes we could not pass." After a suitable preamble, he begins with counsels as to the conduct of divine worship. "Divine service is to be reverently and deliberately celebrated by day and by night at the appointed hours, with due pauses, ceremonies, and inclinations, in the fear of God, with fervour of spirit, with due and entire utterance, as well in the Hours of the Blessed Virgin as in the other services. Singing is to be carefully rendered. The Psalms are to be sung with due attention to simultaneous attack, as musicians put it, to pause, rest, and length of note. There is to be no drawling, and no irreverent haste.

* All these charters are printed in Vol. IV. of the "Antiquities of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff," published for the Spalding Club.

Then there are minute directions about attendance at worship, and behaviour during worship. There are to be no disorderly gestures, or laughter and cackling, or any irregularities whatever in the choir. No one is to dare to take part in celebrating divine service without his cowl. Equally minute rules are given for the celebration of the sacrament, and for cleanliness and decorum in all that pertains to communion vessels and linen. "On every altar are to be two seemly towels, one for wiping the hands of the priest before consecration, and the other for drying the chalices after communicating."

After worship, points of life and conduct are considered, and the lesser proprieties, as of clothing, are detailed, as well as the graver elements of character. "The Lord Abbot is forbidden, under pain of suspension, to introduce, or to allow to be introduced, into the choir of the church, the halls, cloisters, rooms, or gardens, any women save of the blood royal, or at least duchesses or countesses." Monks are forbidden to go abroad wearing great swords, or to go to weddings, or dinners, or shows, or to frequent taverns. Punishment is not overlooked, for the Abbot is instructed within a year of the receipt of the ordinances to have in his monastery a good strong prison—indeed, it is the plural which is used, "good strong prisons." Silence is not only praised but enforced in a characteristically emphatic way. "And, because by ill-regulated conversations very many bickerings are caused, consciences are disturbed, and charity is oft offended, and discipline, which is the anchor of religion, is altogether weakened, therefore silence, which is the key of religion, and without the observance of which a monk can scarcely be saved, we enjoin to be inviolably observed in every place before prayers, and also in chapter, and after compline, according to the tradition of our holy rule, and at time of reading, and at all times in places specified by the rules of the order." The rule of silence is also to be rigorously enforced with reference to visitors who may come to the monastery. No monk may speak who is not appointed to receive guests, unless he have a special permission. Among other peculiar duties there is to be a regular washing of feet with special service and canticle on Sundays, and when for sufficient reason, as of health, this rite of cleanliness has to be for the day omitted, the religious service is by no means to be neglected. The rules bear also upon promotion to the priesthood and education. Before anyone can be admitted to holy orders he must be twenty-four, and he must give proof that he knows by heart his psalter, hymns, canticles, and anthems. A novice must be at least fourteen, and there must be a year's probation before admission. Due arrangements are to be made for instruction of the younger members in literature, in the elementary sciences, or in the more advanced, according to the capacity of the scholars, because "an untaught youth begets a miserable old age, and ignorance is the cause of many evils."

There then follow simple rules as to food, and above all, as to fasting, yet in the midst of all the rigour, there is an unfailing human touch, for the Mother

Church is infinitely tender as well as stern. The infirm are specially to be cared for, and their wants of all kinds must be punctiliously considered. "For their service some honourable monk, studiously anxious, charitable, and God-fearing, must be deputed," and he must have all "needful comforts and helpers."

The last subject touched upon is PROPERTY.

The seal of the convent is to be kept locked up. There are to be four keys, of which the Abbot is to have one, if he wish it, the Prior the second, the bursar or cellarer the third, and one of the older brethren, chosen by his fellows, the fourth. The seal is only to be affixed with the consent and good-will of the "major or sounder" portion of the convent. No brother is to have any property save what the Abbot gives, or allows. The Abbot is to study to root out the vice of private property. None of the brethren, except those holding temporal offices, may keep money more than twenty-four hours under pain of excommunication. Any brother convicted is to be punished as a *proprietarius*—a property-holder!

The Abbot is not to permit any of the brethren to hold individually any lands, gardens, granaries, or animals, or such-like, either for a fixed time or for life, under pain of deposition from his dignity as Abbot.

Members who offend against these rules are to be punished severely. Close confinement on bread and water is appointed for them. Two Bursars are to receive all rents and incomings, and accounts are to be submitted every three months, or at least twice a year. They are to be audited and signed by the Abbot or by a commissioner of the order, and must be presented for examination at the visitation of the convent. Abbots are warned against the alienation of the convent property, and any prejudice already suffered is to be remedied in every just and legal way. Ruinous buildings are to be repaired and restored, and first of all the most decayed. "Within three weeks of the receipt of this roll of ordinances, a Prior is to be appointed, and the rules must be read four times a year in the chapter-house, in presence of the Abbot and convent, within three days of the four seasons."

Where the brethren of Deir may have specially failed we cannot tell, because these regulations were designed for all Cistercian monasteries, and they show that a weak executive was then, as it is now, in many religious organisations, the root of grave evils.

We get a nearer view of the monastic life at Deir, in what is usually called a charter or deed of mitigation. The brethren had remonstrated because some of the rules bore with special rigour upon their most innocent pursuits, and had evidently been drawn up without consideration of their special circumstances. Their protest brought a visit, in 1537, from Walter, Abbot of Glenluce, and Robert, Abbot of Kinloss, who was, as such, the immediate superior of the Abbot and Abbey of Deir. Robert Reid was one of the truly great men in the falling time of the old Church. His father had died on Flodden Field in 1513, and a self-reliant youth seems to have engendered a wise and fruitful mid-age. He

was educated at S. Salvator's College, St. Andrews, which had been founded in 1450 by Bishop James Kennedy, one of the wisest and most large-hearted men who ever adorned the Primacy of the Scottish Church, in any epoch or under any form. Reid studied also at Paris, and his first priest's charge was at Dallas in Moray, a cure filled by the sub-dean of that diocese. He was Commendator of Kinloss from 1526, and Prior of Beaulieu in 1530. He was a Senator of the College of Justice, and from 1550 President of the Court. In 1541 he became Bishop of Orkney. He restored S. Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall, and in every possible way laboured and planned for the advancement of learning and religion. He was present at the marriage of the youthful Queen Mary to the Dauphin of France, on April 24, 1558, and he died in September of that year at Dieppe, at the same time as two other Scottish Commissioners, in circumstances which made Scots folk justly suspicious of poisoning. He bequeathed 8,000 merks—a great sum for the time—to found a college in Edinburgh, and it was this bequest which really led to the foundation of the Town's College, the Academia of James VI.

This is a long digression, but one is glad of an opportunity of paying a slight tribute to a wise and philanthropic Scotsman, whose memory has never been honoured as it ought to be in his native land.

This charter of mitigation shows both wisdom and firmness; there is a desire to consider circumstances and times, but no disposition to permit laxity or disobedience to the Cistercian rule. He and his fellow-commissioner perceive "the difficult situation of the place, and the malignity of the time." They know the conditions and customs of the country, as no Abbot of Charleroi possibly could, however willing he might be to learn them and consider them. "Bursars," such is the tenor of this new instruction, "are, by special lease and stable assignation of the better and freer fruits and incomings of the whole monastery, to receive fixed sums of money and victuals, sufficient for the honourable maintenance in food, clothing, and all necessaries, of the brethren and common servants, from which income, without delay, they are to supply to each all requisites, as well to the hale as to the sick, to travellers, and to relatives of the brethren casually visiting at the monastery, so that no just ground of murmuring may remain."

Common servants are to be appointed by the Abbot to wait specially upon the elder brethren, and likewise to assist in the common work of the monastery. Special servants are allowed to the office-bearers only, and no one is to have a table-companion. What is left from meals, after supplying the necessities of the convent servants, is to be given to the poor by a brother appointed for the purpose. Permission is granted to the brethren to have gardens* of their own

* "Mr. Ferguson of Pitfour, when laying out an orchard in the Abbey gardens, nearly ninety years ago, found in the garden of the Abbey of Deir, first, a layer of rich soil three feet deep, second, a well-paved causeway of granite, third, a bed of pure sand one foot deep, fourthly, another causeway of granite; and below the whole a considerable depth of rich mould."

during the pleasure of the Abbot, within the enclosure of the monastery ; but only to those about whom there may be no suspicion of evil conduct. The fruits and incomings from these gardens are to be collected by the Bursar of the whole community, and after supplying the wants of the brethren, they are to be expended in charity—with advice and consent of the Abbot, or, in his absence, of the Prior. All the other rules in the previous charter are to be entirely and faithfully obeyed. The two visiting Abbots close with certain precepts on their own account for the better performance of divine service, and for fuller knowledge of the ceremonies and rules of the order. Having seen what needs remedy, they call attention to the infirmary and the heating-apparatus, to the need for teaching and study, and they command all table-companions and secular servants to be dismissed by the 31st May, save such as are retained for common service in the convent. The Abbot of Deir is urged to give diligent heed to repair of the monastery buildings, beginning with the choir of the Abbey Church.

The Abbot at the time was John Innes, and the Visitors prevailed upon him to assign a fixed portion for the needs of his flock. The Abbot was every year to render a faithful account of the whole rents of the Abbey to five or six of the brethren chosen for the purpose. The convent was to choose annually a cellarer or steward, and a bursar or treasurer. The bursar was annually to receive from the fruits and rents of the barony and rectory of Deir, or the rectory of Peterugy, what would be sufficient to provide for each monk, per day, a loaf of good flour of sixteen ounces when cooked, along with two cakes or loaves of oatmeal, reckoning two hundred cakes to the boll of meal. Also for liquor, daily, two quarts of ale, counting ten gallons (or flagons) of ale at most from the boll. Sixpence was allowed for flesh days, and twopence for fish days ; a pound of pepper a year was to be given, and for the butter of the whole convent forty shillings yearly ; also eight dozen poultry, and in Lent forty salmon, with salt in sufficient quantity for the cook's table, and for seasoning of the flesh and fish of the convent. Each brother was to have annually four stones of cheese. They were also to have lentils and barley in sufficient quantity, instead of beans. Two oxen were to be purchased by the bursar annually, about Easter, and these were to be fattened along with others for the convent and for the guests' table. They were to have thirty lambs a year, and the fish of two boats at the harbour of Rahill, of the same value as in years bypast. The cook and the fireman were to have annually twelve bolls of meal, and the fish-porter was to be paid in the accustomed fashion. The Abbot was also to assign a sufficient cellar for the convent liquor, and each monk was to be allowed forty shillings a year for clothing. The barber, tailor, and laundress, were to have satisfactory wages. The residue was to be applied for the benefit of the community to the best of the Abbot's ability.

Five years later, in May, 1542, the same Abbot adds to the comforts of the brethren. A sum of eightpence is now allowed on flesh days, and of threepence

on fish days, the money to be collected at Whitsunday and Martinmas, while the bursar gets twelve capons yearly in lieu of pittances for charity.

According to a manuscript, formerly in possession of the Spalding Club, Abbot John Innes was succeeded by Michael Pittendreich, probably a nephew or younger brother of Abbot James Pittendreich, who, in 1518, alienated Pittendreich and Craigmodarty, reserving a life-rent to himself. He seems, however, never to have been installed, for in 1543 Robert Keith, brother of William, fourth Earl Marischal, was presented to the abbacy by Mary of Lorraine, the Queen Dowager, "because by the resignation of John, the present Abbot, in the hands of our most holy lord, the abbacy is shortly to be vacant." Yet a supplementary note in one of the Gale MSS. asserts that Abbot John Innes died in 1543, and that Keith was then chosen in his room. Michael Pittendreich had evidently some special claim upon the Abbey, for in the spring of 1545 Mary wrote to Pope Paul III. about certain pensions out of the revenue of Deir, especially one to Dene Michael Pittendreich, an acknowledged member of that monastery, "abrogation of which allowance the new Commendator is thought to be compassing."

It is probable that Pittendreich was the ecclesiastic designed for the preferment, but that in the stormy time it was deemed expedient to conciliate the most powerful noble in Scotland by giving the abbacy to his full brother, who was as yet but a layman. According to Dempster—not a very reliable authority, although in this he may be right, for he is quoted in good faith by Spottiswood—"Robert Keith was famous for his learning and for the purity of his life, and did much to restore the shattered character of the ecclesiastical order." One suspects that the words are an echo of the eulogy of Thomas Crystall. In July, 1544, his name appears in a deed as Abbot Postulate, and there sign with him Robert Stevensoun, Prior; Thomas Keyr, Sub-Prior; John Anderson, Alexander Scherer, John Cullane, William Bell, Duncan [Lownane], William Pendreicht, Gilbert Innes, Gilbert Chissem, John Mason, all brethren of the monastery, and, besides them, Master George Myddletoun, and Master Andrew Kyd, stewards.

In November, 1544, the Prior and convent sign a statement of the rental of the Abbey lands. Gilbert Chisholm is Prior, and Thomas Keyr, William Smyth, Thomas Weyr, John Keytht, James Browne, Alexander Torre, David Howesoun, William Elphinstone, and Gilbert Murray are the monks. In a confirmation granted to Robert Lumsden and Elizabeth Keytht of the lands of Meikle Auchrady, the Prior and brethren are as in November, 1544, save that Thomas Weyr does not sign. Robert Keith died in Paris in 1551, having never assumed the habit of the Cistercian order. The Priors in his time were men of mark. Gilbert Chisholm we shall meet again after the Reformation. Dempster commemorates Samuel Prior of Deir during Keith's abbacy, "a man marvellously learned in all good arts, especially in mathematics, in which he excelled so greatly as to be esteemed by common rumour a magician." Dempster's imagination is always lively. It is possible that Samuel is an error for

Stevensoun, who as Sub-Prior corresponded in 1537 with John Ferrerius of Piedmont, the historian of Kinloss Abbey. Stevenson is first mentioned in an excessively flattering letter by Ferrerius. It is dated 4th February, 1537, and is addressed "to his most beloved the Sub-Prior at Dier, the most learned champion of antiquity—Dene Robert Stevensoun." It begins with an account of Ferrier's labours in collecting material for a history of Kinloss Abbey. He is conscious of its obscure and defective character, and he sees no hope of writing worthily a true and connected history, unless from some other quarter greater light should shine forth, and that, too, with considerable brightness. "There are, besides, men in Scotland who can shed a flood of light upon this darkness, if they be asked; for among them, I know well, a very great number of ancient writings have been preserved. But I know not a single man who is both so well qualified and so willing to help me in this work as yourself, both as a champion of antiquity, as a friend of all studious persons, and as specially distinguished at once by candour and learning." This is, of course, the language of compliment and high-flown courtesy, but it proves that Stevenson was known as an excellent scholar, and a man ready to advance erudition. One slight memorial of Stevenson's learning perhaps remains to this day. Among the MSS. belonging to the University of St. Andrews, is a Latin translation of Aristotle's "Politics." "It is written upon vellum," so Mr. Maitland Anderson, the University librarian writes me, "in a very neat hand of perhaps the 13th or 14th century. The volume is small folio in form, bound in wooden boards covered with stamped brown leather, rather worn. It contains a great many notes in a very small hand, but they seem all to refer to the text. . . . Inside the front board is written the name of a previous owner something like this."

*Robertus Stevensoun
deirensis canonici*

Stevenson continued Prior in 1566, when he granted a discharge to the Commendator for £110.

The practical secularisation of Deir may be said to have begun with Robert Keith. On his death, in June, 1551, it continued, for the new Commendator was his nephew, a boy of fifteen, also Robert, who succeeded to the powers and possessions of the Abbot in 1552, and ere long began the process of alienation of lands by tacks and gifts to the members of the Keith family from the Earl Marischal, his father, downwards. This youth sat in the Parliament of 29th November, 1558, and was chosen by the clergy as one of their representatives

among the Lords of the Articles. With the transference of all power and rights to the kindred of the Earl Marischal the religious work of the Abbey came to an end. Several of the brethren became ministers of the Reformed Church. David Howesoun was successively minister at Philorth or Fraserburgh, at Kinedar, and at Aberdour. Gilbert Chisholm was minister at Deir. Of the others no trace remains. Whether any fled with their most valued treasures to France, or elsewhere, may be matter of conjecture, but nothing more. The easy completeness of the secularisation forms a marked contrast to the sturdiness of the Celtic monastic community, and gives ample proof of the great power of the lay lord of the province.



THE ABBEY OF DEIR IN 1770.

CHAPTER VII.

The Parish and Ministers of Deir,
From the Reformation to the Revolution.

THE Reformation in Scotland, from whatever point of view we consider it, was a Revolution. The Parliament of 24th August, 1560, did not merely adopt a new creed or Confession of Faith, abolish the service of the Mass, and abjure the jurisdiction of the Pope in Scotland. It assumed to itself all authority, and very speedily the major part of the nobles and landed gentry gave effect to its policy. It had been followed in December by the first General Assembly. This had four dozen members, of whom six were ministers. How far this Revolution was based upon knowledge of the Articles, which the young Queen Mary was prevailed upon to sign prior to her marriage with the Dauphin, may only be conjectured. He was an ill counsellor who persuaded her to undertake to hand over her country to France, and they are poor judges of a young girl's character who lay much blame upon her. What concerns us here, however, is the undoubted fact that wherever a great lord held by the Reformation the change was made good. William, fourth Earl Marischal, was the richest of the Scottish nobility, and he was likewise one of the shrewdest and most influential. His father had fallen at Flodden, and he succeeded his grandfather in 1530. He was of the English party in Scotland, and favourable to the Reformation, but he had not signed the Bond of December, 1557, drawn up by Knox, which constituted the Congregation. He had listened to the preaching both of George Wishart and of Knox, and he was one of the Lords who visited Mary of Lorraine as she lay dying in Edinburgh Castle. Bishop Keith says shrewdly—"He was looked upon as a favourer of the Reformation, as no doubt he was, though I have never observed him subscribing any of the public papers emitted by that party." At the Parliament in August, 1560, "he made a speech in favour of the Confession, and declared that to him the silence of the Prelates seemed to be an irrefragable testimony of its truth." He was moderate and cautious, and when Queen Mary returned to Scotland he was opposed to the resolution to deprive her of the Mass. He kept himself clear of plots, and after Darnley's death he withdrew from public life altogether. The wealthiest peer in Scotland, with a rental of 270,000 merks, might well be wary in such tempestuous times. His character, as well as his wealth, was outstanding, and one is glad to think that there was some moral worth among the Scottish nobility of the time. His eldest daughter, Anne Keith, was the wife of Regent Moray, and after his death she became Countess

of Argyll. Looking to his wealth, his character, and his Protestant connection, we may conclude that behind the scenes, when matters of policy were discussed, the Earl Marischal would have greater weight than any man in Scotland. He died in 1581. He was succeeded by his grandson George, fifth Earl Marischal, who was active in affairs both of Church and State, and a staunch Protestant. He went in 1589 as Ambassador Extraordinary to Denmark to bring about the marriage of James VI. and the Princess Anne.

In 1587 his uncle Robert Keith, the Commendator of Deir, had resigned all the Abbey possessions into the hands of the King, by whom they were erected into the Lordship of Altrie, and lands and title were conferred upon the Commendator, who lived as Lord Altrie but a couple of years. In 1590, "in recompense [for the charges of his journey to Denmark], the Earl obtained the abbacy of Deir, in perpetual monument of the said service to him and to his for ever." Rage and chagrin probably inspired the seizure of the House of Deir by the Earl's brother, Robert Keith, already narrated by Mr. Ferguson. In 1593, Earl George founded and endowed Marischal College, Aberdeen, but none of the Abbey possessions in this district were gifted to the new University. He died in April, 1623. His son William, who succeeded, died in October, 1635, and was succeeded by his son William, born 1617. This seventh Earl favoured the Covenanting party, but he had the hereditary moderation of his race. In July, 1638, the Covenanting ministers preached in the Earl Marischal's Close at Aberdeen, while the Earl, as Covenanting leader in Aberdeenshire and the Mearns, aided Montrose against Huntly and Aboyne. In May, 1640, he enforced the signature of the Covenant in Aberdeen, and although for a moment he seems to have gone over with Montrose to the royalist side, he never actively turned against his former friends.

He was at the rout of Preston in 1648, where his son was taken sword in hand. In December, 1650, he was chosen colonel of the regiments from the shires of Aberdeen and Banff, and in the following year he was committed to the Tower by Cromwell. He was a *Resolutioner*, and was probably as obnoxious to the high-flying *Protesters* in Scotland as to the great Protector himself. At the Restoration he came to his own again, and was Keeper of the Privy Seal until his death in 1661.

The Reformation thus gave the Earls Marischal control of the whole district, not to say parish. Smaller proprietors were either of their kin or their creation. As for religious fervour among the people, so notable in Fife, the Lothians, and the West Country, there are no traces of it. The masses fell into line with their leader, and appear to have adopted his creed as they tilled his land.

There is no record of any Protestant clergyman between 1560 and 1567, but after Regent Moray's first Parliament in 1567, when the Reformed Church was put upon a legal basis, GILBERT CHISHOLM, formerly Prior of the Abbey, was settled in the parish. He had for his charge Deir, Foveran, Peterhead,

and Saint Fergus. His stipend was £40 Scots, and it is probable that he kept possession of that portion of Church lands which was of old the Clerics' Field, and is now the Glebe of Deir. He was made Parson of Lonmay in May, 1569, and Vicar of Rathen in October, 1570. In 1574, the year in which Earl Marischal has an action against certain defaulting tenants in right of a tack of the teynd-schaves which had been granted in 1567, Chisholm's duties were restricted to Deir, Fetterangus, and Rathen, and in 1576, to Deir and Fetterangus. He seems to have died in 1586. It is a melancholy comment on the Earl Marischal's Protestantism that in twenty years he had done so little to provide for the religious wants of the people. But the Earl was an old man, and the times were "bruckle," as Scots folk say.

Chisholm was succeeded by ABRAHAM SIBBALD, whose tombstone may still be seen built into the north wall of the old church. He was translated from Nigg on June 18th, 1586, and was soon a leading spirit in the church life of the district. He was of the family of Silbald of Keir, in the Mearns, and was thus related to Dr. James Sibbald, minister of New Aberdeen, one of the Aberdeen doctors, and possibly to James Sybbald, vicar of Arbuthnott, writer of the *Arbuthnott Missal*, who died in 1507. The year after his settlement "for the preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments," there was erected a rectory or parsonage in each of the parish churches of Deir, Peterugie, Foveran, and Kinedward. Each rector was to have manse and glebe, and was to be held to make continuous residence at his church, and serve the cure. For stipend, the minister of Deir, more fortunate than his brethren, was to have three chalders of oatmeal and two hundred merks in money. Sibbald was one of the ministers in the Sheriffdom of Aberdeen appointed, in terms of the Acts of the General Assemblies of 1587 and 1588 against Jesuits, "to call and convene before them persons of whatsoever rank to subscribe the Confession of Faith." As minister of Deir he was one of the governing body of Marischal College appointed by the Earl Marischal, as Founder and Patron, to examine and admit the professors or regents in the new seat of learning. Among his colleagues were the ministers at New Aberdeen and Fetteresso. When Presbytery was temporarily crushed in 1596, Sibbald was of the Episcopal or King's party, and in 1606 he was named constant Moderator of Presbytery, and the Presbytery of Deir, by an Act of the Privy Council of 17th January, 1607, were ordered to receive him as such within forty-eight hours, under pain of rebellion. He was specially invited in 1619 to the admission of Dr. Forbes as Principal of the College, as among the Aberdeen Guildry accounts for 1619-1620 we find: "Item to ane poist to gang with a letter to Deir to Mr. Abraham Sibbald, to come in to the admission of Doctour Forbes, Principall, 16 shillings." The same official on that occasion "at command of the magistrattis and counsall debursit £5 6s. 8d. for ane collatioun given to Mr. Andro Myne, minister at Fetteresso, and Mr. Abraham Sibbald, minister at Dear, and sic as were with thame in John Tullidaff's hous." He was a member

of the Glasgow Assembly of 1610, and of the Aberdeen Assembly of August, 1616, and, doubtless, acted steadily with the Episcopal section to which he belonged. His part in the annexation of Fetterangus, and in the erection of the "new Paroche of Deir" has been already told. He died before 1635. As his epitaph closes with the words **TEMPLI STRUCTURA AUCTA MONUMENTUM DEDIT**, "an addition to the church supplied a memorial," there must have been some extension of the Church of Deir during his ministry.

The influence of a Covenanting Patron is evident in the choice of his successor. **ALEXANDER MARTIN**, brother of Nathanael Martin of Peterhead, had been for some time labouring at Longside, which was not yet erected into a parish. His name first appears as Minister of Deir in a copy or draft of a teind process of valuation, of date 4th February, 1635. He was a member of the famous Glasgow Assembly of 1638 which abolished Episcopacy, and in 1640, he was one of a committee appointed on 19th June to prosecute non-covenanting ministers, for Thomas Martyn, as Scott conjectures, seems plainly an error for Alexander. The people appear contentedly to have gone with the civil and ecclesiastical powers that were. If there was any murmuring on the part of those who held with their old pastor, Mr. Sibbald, there remains no record. It may be taken as certain that some of his parishioners, if not Martin himself, took part in the Trot of Turriff in May, 1639. He was "accounted eminent in his day for gifts, grace, faithfulness, and success." As the Presbytery record for this period is lost, the date of his death is not known. It must have been before 27th March, 1649, when his successor, **ROBERT KEITH, A.M.**, appears. This Robert Keith was possibly a relative of Robert Keith, who, in the teind process of February, 1635, being chamberlain, gives oath as to the Earl Marischal's rental in the parish. Keith graduated at St. Andrews in 1645, and is stated by Scott to have been a Regent in S. Salvator's or the Old College there. Early in his ministry, in 1649, there was a division of the kirk among the heritors and tenants, as appears from a kirk-session minute of 11th July, 1755, which quotes verbatim the minute of 1649. Assessors chosen by the Presbytery to assist the session made the division, and "they appointed for Mr. George Clark, schoolmaster, all the room from the Great South Door eastwards as much as shall be left when the new Pulpit shall be builded." Keith was a zealous Covenanter, and along with Nathanael Martin, Peterhead, and Duncan Forbes of New Pittsigo, he ruled the Presbytery of Deir, and was the one "who plotted all." He had leave from the Presbytery to go with the army in 1650, when pulpit supplies were appointed in his absence, and in 1651, he cast in his lot with the more violent members of the Covenanting party as a Protestant. As the Earl Marischal was a King's man, and had suffered in the royal cause, Keith was deprived of his living at a very early date—Scott gives 17th April, 1660. As he must then have been under forty years of age, one wonders what was the lot of the fallen Triumvir.

Probably he was one of those who after the Restoration held conventicles in Buchan.

The first minister after the Restoration was one who had an extraordinary run of promotion. ARTHUR ROSS was a son of Alexander Ross, minister of Birse, and held first of all the cure of Kinnernie, a small parish now united to Midmar. He was translated to Deir prior to 27th October, 1663, in all probability shortly after Keith's deprivation. In the following year he was promoted to S. Mungo's, the Cathedral Church of Glasgow, "with charge at first of the south, and afterwards of the north quarter of the city." He was consecrated Bishop of Argyll in 1675, and became successively Bishop of Galloway in September, 1679, Archbishop of Glasgow in October, 1679, and Archbishop of St. Andrews in 1684, and as such, Chancellor of the University. After the Revolution he lived in a private fashion at Edinburgh. He died in June, 1704, and was buried at Restalrig.

When he was Archbishop of St. Andrews, his successor in the cure of Kinnernie had an interview with him. The story is to be found in a quaint series of travellers' letters, published in 1781, by Francis Douglas of Abbot's Inch, Paisley. "Being somewhat of the nature of Pharaoh's butler, when exalted he did not remember his brethren. It was, however, very natural to suppose that one who had felt the inconvenience of a small stipend himself would be ready to lend every reasonable aid to have his successor bettered, and upon this rational presumption the minister of Kinnernie reckoned upon the interest of his metropolitan in his intended application for an augmentation of his living. He waited upon the Primate and laid the case before him. 'You country clergymen,' said the bishop, 'should learn to moderate your desires. I know what it is to live in the country. When I was minister of your parish I could afford a bottle of good malt liquor and a roasted fowl for my Sunday's dinner, and I see not to what further you are entitled.' The rural priest made his bow and retired with this parting compliment:—'It would have been no great loss to the Church of Scotland though your Grace had been yet eating roasted hens at Kinnernie!'"*

Ross was, most justly, an admirer of the Book of Common Prayer. He wrote when in Glasgow to Archbishop Sancroft—"I have never had the happiness to be in England, but I wish with all my heart that we could once be happy to see here that decency of worship, that regularity of order, and that harmony that is in the constitution and devotions of that famous Church in which your Grace most deservedly doth possess the highest station."

* The country parson's unkind estimate of Archbishop Ross is confirmed by the latest historian of the Scottish Episcopal Church:—"Ross was without any of the abilities requisite for the responsible offices into which he was thrust, now in Glasgow and later in St. Andrews. It was no light misfortune for the Episcopal Church that so weak a man was Primate in the crisis of the Revolution."—Stephen's *History of the Scottish Church* (D. Douglas), vol. ii., p. 388.

ALEXANDER GAIRDYNE, son of Mr. George Gairdyne, minister of Clatt, succeeded. He was educated at King's College, and was admitted helper at Gartly before 2nd October, 1660, from which parish he was translated to this after 4th April, 1665. Whether he was related to his namesake, the minister of Forgue, and thus to Dr. George Garden of S. Nicholas, and to Dr. James Garden of King's College, Aberdeen, I have not been able to ascertain.

At least before 18th April, 1676, ROBERT BRUCE, A.M., was settled. At the time of his promotion to Deir he was a regent or professor in Marischal College. It is interesting to compare the emoluments of the two charges. A regent, by the Earl Marischal's deed of foundation, had a chalder and a half of barley and forty pounds Scots in the year; by a decree, following upon the process of valuation of February, 1635, the minister of Deir had a stipend of five chalders of victual and 500 merks. Mr. Bruce was presented to the Tron Church, Edinburgh, and admitted in March, 1681; but he resigned the same year, being one of eighty ministers who left their parishes rather than take the oath prescribed by the Test Act of that year. His conduct makes one wonder if he was of the family of Robert Bruce of Kinnaird, although the senseless tyranny of that Test Act might well have roused antagonism in one with a less heroic ancestry.

After him came JOHN COCKBURN, D.D., who was minister at Deir from the autumn of 1681 until June, 1683. Cockburn was in many respects the most remarkable of all the ministers who ever served the cure, alike from the vicissitudes of his life and the variety and volume of his writings. There is a very full account of him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, from which the following particulars have been taken. He was born April 20, 1662. The son of a north country laird who had married a sister of Bishop Scougal, he was educated chiefly at King's College, Aberdeen, and graduated A.M. in June, 1671. He was tutor to Lord Keith from 1673-1675, and was ordained to Udny in February, 1676. There was a tumult, after the approved manner, at his induction, fomented doubtless by the laird of Udny, who claimed the right of presentation. The Earl Marischal presented him to Deir, and he was inducted between 10th August and 7th September, 1681. When the Test Act was passed he at first refused to take the oath, but eventually complied. In June, 1683, he was presented to Ormiston, in Midlothian, the patron being Sir Alexander Cockburn. It was a Presbyterian district, and, as a zealous Episcopalian, he had troubles in plenty. He remained of King James's party, and was ejected in August, 1689. He was banished from Scotland and went to London, which "he had to leave for writing of pamphlets." He crossed to St. Germains; but he declined to become Roman Catholic, and as this lost him the royal goodwill, he journeyed to Rotterdam, and there formed an Anglican congregation. He was Anglican chaplain at Amsterdam in 1698, and after many movements which need not be detailed, he was presented to the vicarage of North Holt, in Middlesex, in June, 1714. Queen Anne had intended to make him a Colonial Bishop. He was an

indefatigable parish priest, and had many interests, both intellectual and practical. He died 20th November, 1729. He was twice married. His first wife was a sister of Dr. James Garden, Professor of Divinity, Aberdeen. Cockburn was made a D.D. before 1697, and, unlike his brothers-in-law, the Gardens, he was an eager opponent of the doctrines of Antonia Bourignon. He wrote several tracts on this subject, and besides writing and publishing on Christian Evidences, Suicide, Duels, and Marriage, he was a vigorous controversialist, and assailed Bishop Burnett's "History" with no little asperity.

The last incumbent under the Restoration *regime* was GEORGE KEITH. He was a son of John Keith, minister of Garvoeck, and had been schoolmaster of Methlick, and was recommended for license by the Presbytery of Ellon on 24th October, 1667. His first charge was at Monkeggie, now Keith-hall and Kinkell, where he was settled in 167—, being translated to Deir in 1683. As nearly all the gentry, from the Earl Marischal downwards, and with them, a very considerable body of the people were attached to Episcopacy and to the Stuart dynasty, Mr. Keith was more fortunate than Mr. Cockburn at Ormiston, although he did not take the oaths in 1689. He kept the people and the benefice until his death on 14th July, 1710. In the *Poll-Book* he and his household appear. His son, Alexander, afterwards Episcopal minister at Cruden, and writer of the "View of the Diocese of Aberdeen," was then—1695—a boy under sixteen years of age.



THE LAKE AT PITFOUR

CHAPTER VIII.

The Parish and Ministers of Deir

**From the Revolution Settlement until the Death of the
Rev. James Peter in 1886.**

THE religious unity of the parish comes to an end with the ministry of Mr. Keith. From the Reformation onwards, in spite of recurring changes from Presbytery to Episcopacy, there had been but one parish church and one flock under one shepherd. The great public influence of the Keith family made their lead all important, so that, whatever difference of sentiment there might be among the people, there was up to this point no actual outward separation. The Revolution Settlement changed all this, and the abolition of Patronage in 1690 for a little while altered the seat of ecclesiastical power. This passed for the moment from the landed interest to the Presbyterian leaders in the church at large and in each district. For the one patron there was substituted a small body of patrons, the heritors and elders, who were to propose to the congregation; and the local Presbytery were not merely judges of the call, but, in the event of no settlement within six months, the right of presentation fell absolutely to them. The Presbyteries of the Church were thus able to see that aspirants were loyal to the Revolution Settlement. Their very vigilance was a grievous cause of offence.

There can be little doubt that on Mr. Keith's death the major part of the heritors and people would have desired the settlement of Mr. William Livingstone. When this could not be, the leading Episcopal parishioners endeavoured to procure a call to Mr. James Maitland at Inverkeithny, and the Rabbling of Deir, already described in Mr. Ferguson's introductory sketch, according to the common published accounts of the time, was doubtless instigated by the partisans of Mr. Maitland, who were Mr. Livingstone's congregation. Presbytery was not in the ascendant in Buchan, but it was the ruling force in Scotland, and, as it had law and might behind it, it naturally used both. In suffering Mr. Keith to enjoy his living at Deir for more than twenty years, the local Presbytery had certainly been tolerant and humane. Presbytery has its own burden of error and violence. It has often exceeded in denunciation, and it has at times lacked humour and dignity, but it has nothing to show on a par with the "Killing Time," and the perjury of Sharpe and Lauderdale.

No legal appointment having been made within six months of Mr. Keith's death, the Presbytery presented Mr. JOHN GORDON on 20th February, 1711, and

when the Church doors were kept locked and violence was shown on the day fixed for his settlement, the Presbytery, on 8th April, by instructions from the Synod, ordained Mr. Gordon in Aberdeen. The ringleaders of the Rabble had to give ample satisfaction in order to escape a criminal prosecution, but they did not carry out their undertaking "not to countenance any other in this parish but Mr. Gordon, nor hear any other."

The Rabbling of Deir is usually credited with evoking the Act of Toleration of 1712, and the Act of the same year restoring Patronage. Its gets too high a compliment, in spite of the testimony of the Master of Saltoun. The restoration of Patronage came from a higher quarter. Mr. Gordon's ministry cannot have been a happy one. He was in the midst of a population with eager and influen-



PITFOUR HOUSE.

tial leaders, hostile to the whole Revolution Settlement. The rising of 1715, when the Chevalier landed at Peterhead and the young Earl Marischal was a Jacobite leader, when the popular mind was in a ferment, and when "Mr. Livingstone invaded or intruded into the Church of Deir and prayed there in *nominatim* for the Popish Pretender," must have tested the courage of the boldest Presbyterian Whig, and the subsequent forfeiture of the Earl Marischal's estates would but add to the confusion. Mr. Gordon died early in 1718.

Once more the right of presentation fell to the Presbytery, and on 26th November, 1718, they appointed, and on the 4th February, 1719, they admitted JOHN FORBES of Pitnacadell or Pitnacalder, minister of Pitsligo, to the church and parish of Deir. Forbes is without dispute the biggest figure in our local ecclesi-

astical annals. He was of distinguished descent, and had a dash of the blood of Lord Forbes of Pitsligo and of the Earls Marischal in his veins. He had personal knowledge of the violence of the opposing party, he was a convinced Presbyterian of the old "right divine" stamp, he had no doubts or hesitations, and his energy had abundant scope during a ministry of over fifty years.

The ancestral estate of Pitneycalder or Pitnacadell, in Aberdour, is valued in the *Poll-Book* at £80 Scots. His grandfather, John Forbes, and his father, James Forbes, were both elders in that parish. A female ancestor was a Johnston of Caskieben, a sister of the Latin poet, Arthur Johnston. His eldest sister married John Cumine, younger of Achrie, in 1698. He was born in 1688, being his father's fourth child and eldest son, and he became schoolmaster of Alvah in Banffshire, in 1707. He was not licensed to preach until 20th March, 1716, when, his reputation for Whiggery being considerable, his trial sermon had to be delayed because of a warrant from the Jacobite leaders to apprehend him. If Forbes really be the author of the song *Nae dominies for me, laddie*—which I doubt, because it is both coarse and worldly, in spite of a certain rude vigour—it may be safely credited to those years of schoolmastering. His career as a teacher came to an end in February, 1717, when he was ordained to the parish of Pitsligo. His era of strenuous conflict may be said to have begun with his removal to Deir. His great aim was to hold by the national Establishment, and to strengthen Presbytery at all points.

He had scope for his powers, and he rose to the occasion. He was a leader among his brethren, and, as early as April, 1720, he was put on the leet and voted on for the Moderator's chair in the Synod of Aberdeen. It was then a custom to have a leet of eight or nine names. He was elected Moderator in October, 1725, and in April, 1726, he preached as retiring Moderator. In April, 1731, he again preached before the Synod on the Thursday of their meeting by the nomination of the Presbytery of Deir. (The Synod at that time sat for three days, and the Presbyteries in turn nominated the Thursday's preacher). He seems to have preached again in Aberdeen in 1735, for *The Lawful Use of the Law*, a sermon on 1st Tim., i, 8, bears to have been "preached at Aberdeen the 3rd day of April, 1735, that week in which the PROVINCIAL SYNOD sat." His earlier sermon is entitled *The Eminent Character of a Judge or Counsellor, and the Exemplary Conduct of a Christian*.

In October, 1727, Mr. Forbes was at law with the laird of Pitfour about encroachments on the glebe, and the dispute was brought before the Presbytery by petition. Happily there was an adjournment to Jean Barrack's inn, where arbiters were named and the suit adjusted. In 1731 the Church was reported to be ruinous, and the minister was preaching in the churchyard. The fabric was forthwith repaired at a cost of £570 19s. 9d. Scots.

In Deir, as in Scotland generally, the years that follow were tranquil and uneventful. There was stir enough when news of Prince Charlie's landing

reached the parish. Mr. Livingstone's church-officer, James Bowman, "proclaimed the Popish Pretender as King, or his son as Regent, in the Toungate or street of Deir, and the parson had eighteen or twenty disciples in arms." There is a tradition that Pitnacadell was one of Cumberland's chaplains, and himself brought the news of Culloden. He certainly was a more zealous Presbyterian thereafter, and not unnaturally. His principal Whig sympathisers were the Laird and Lady of Kinmundy, especially the Lady, whose ardour outshone his own. Both seem to have been eminently eager for the destruction of Episcopal churches—*meeting-houses*, as Forbes calls them, with that sublime scorn which has so lamentably infected many bodies of Christians, as if contempt were argument, and as if the Gospel with its message of grace and good did not point the way to reverence for all sincere worship, so that to anyone who names the name of Christ every House must be venerable where two or three souls earnestly pray to God in any mode.

Mr. Livingstone's congregation on leaving the parish church had built a chapel on the Earl Marischal's land of Aden. On the Earl's forfeiture the York Buildings Company acquired these lands and sold them to the first Ferguson of Kinmundy, whose wife was so zealous a Whig. Cumberland's troops burnt down the chapel on the 19th May, 1746, and when the Episcopal minister and his people were about to rebuild, Mrs. Ferguson rode over from Kinmundy and caused the walls to be thrown down, and she and her husband and two of their servants, with several in-dwellers in Old Deer, "William Anderson and John Stevenson, servants to Patrick Gordon, merchant, and James Craib, son of George Craib, wright," found themselves cited to the Sheriff Court in Aberdeen.

Mr. Forbes intervened in the case with a characteristic petition (of date 3rd December, 1746), still preserved at Kinmundy. He "was much surprised to hear" of the prosecution of his neighbours, because they were "expressing their consent to the justice of the Government in the decent and most natural way of throwing down a few stones remaining in the wall of that house, which had stood on their own property." His surprise was increased by seeing "an alleged copy or double of a sentence pronounced by the Sheriff-Depute, authorising the rebuilding of a meeting-house in his paroch." He sees in this a question that nearly concerns the tranquility of the State, the interests of the National Established Church, and particularly the Royal authority by which the former meeting-house was burned down. His reasons for petitioning are most interesting, but they need not be given in detail. "The question is not within the Sheriff's jurisdiction." "The man—Mr. Livingstone—has been art and part in rebellion." "The decision confirms one of the worst servitudes on land, not to be justified without the heritors' consent." The fourth reason, however, is too characteristic to be omitted. "Whether a man's taking the abjuration after having preached and prayed for the Popish Pretender for thirty-three years, or in favour of him whom he hath now abjured, can be construed a legall qualification for the privilege

of a meeting-house, though the man have no ordination but from a chimericall, imaginary, or exauctorate bishop." The seventh reason closes with a very subtle touch :—" In the eye of the law Mr. Livingstone never had a meeting-house."

Pitnacadell's intervention seems to have been successful. The chapel, at least, was never rebuilt, and " George Rankine of Auchrynie, Robert Irvine in Little Crichie, James Duguid at Mill of Crichie, Andrew Penny in Knock, George Irvine, litster (or dyer) in Deir, Alexander Nisbit there, Thomas Fraser at Mill of Pitfour, William Bruce at Mains of Pitfour, and William Scot, tacksman of Aden and Deanshillock," were thus far disappointed. In consequence of this legal process Mr. Forbes petitioned the Synod of Aberdeen to interpose with the next General Assembly in his favour, in order to get the expenses of the said process defrayed from the public funds. The Synod duly interposed in his behalf.

Mr. Livingstone did not long survive these vexatious proceedings. He died in December, 1751.

Mr. Forbes had a much abler opponent in Mr. Skinner, of Longside, dear to all Scotsmen as Tullochgorum, and equally deserving to be revered for his wisdom and sweet saintliness of character. He was young and generous, and he fought his Church's battle with great energy and fertility of resource. He has satirised the Whig minister and his congregation and their mode of worship with great severity, but the satire wants the touch of playfulness and humour which alone would make it wholly worthy of John Skinner. Yet he could hardly be expected to see the humorous side of a cause, the representatives of which had put himself in prison, had burnt his church and his books, and had made life bitter, and the practice of his religion difficult.

By the side of a country kirk wall
A sullen Whig minister stood,
Enclosed in an old oaken stall,
Apart from the rest of the crowd.
His hat was hung high on a pin,
With the cocks so devoutly displayed ;
And the cloak that concealed every sin,
On the pulpit was carefully spread.

The irreverence of the people and the political cast of the sermon are then described. The climax is reached in this outburst :—

Let us rise like true Whigs in a band,
As our fathers have oft done before,
And slay all the Tories offhand,
And we shall be quiet once more.

The last lines give but too true a picture of the unseemly haste with which our forefathers rushed out of church :—

Now the hat is ta'en down from the pin,
 And the cloak o'er the shoulders is cast ;
 The people throng out with a din,
 The devil take him that is last.

Mr. Skinner had a special interest in the Episcopal congregation at Deir. From the death of Mr. Livingstone, and at his request, until May, 1753, when he was put in prison, Tullochgorum had charge of both Longside and Deir, and was as unwearied in service as he was unfailing in courage.

Mr. Forbes had not only zealous conflict with the *Chapel* ministers and people, as they are called, but some of his Whig friends saw not eye to eye with him. Lady Kinmundy and the minister were both so eager and imperious that only a great common danger was strong enough to keep them in cordial co-operation. According to her testimony, he was not punctual in his Sunday ser-



ADEN HOUSE.

vices, and came often late to church. As the Kinmundy family had from 1741 sympathised with the Secession Church, this would not mend matters. In 1752, the year of Mrs. Ferguson's death, the Kinmundy family became connected with the congregation at Craigdam, then the only seceding community in Aberdeenshire. No trace of this refractory element can be found in our session records, and it is not impossible that Mr. Forbes himself sympathised somewhat with the Seceders in essentials. He was extremely Evangelical in doctrine, fervid by nature, and eager for popular rights. His zeal against Episcopacy never abated. When

the non-juring, genuine Scottish Episcopalians formed a congregation, Pitnacadell had a stern intimation read to his people warning them against any encroachments on the privileges of the Church of Scotland, particularly in the article of marriage. "The clerk is ordered publicly to proclaim none without pledges and an obligation that they are to be married by a clergyman of the Established Church."

Forbes was a man of energetic mind as well as dominant will, and he set himself to improve worship in his own Presbyterian fashion. He brought out a new edition of Patrick Simson's "Spiritual Songs." It seems to have been a custom, while the people were gathering for worship, to have not only reading of the Scriptures, but singing of these Scriptural songs. Simson's rendering of the Song of Moses—Exodus xv.—is very spirited, but the same cannot be said of his metrical version of the "Song of Solomon," which was occasionally pitched upon to be sung throughout. To this edition Forbes added a small volume of metrical compositions of his own. The title page runs thus:—

SOME SCRIPTURAL HYMNS
SELECTED FROM SUNDRY PASSAGES OF HOLY WRIT,
INTENDED FOR THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH IN SECRET OR SOCIETY,
AS MAY BE THOUGHT AGREEABLE.
BY A MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

It bears to have been printed at Aberdeen in the year 1757. The title-page of the reprint of Simson bears that the original had been printed at Edinburgh in 1685, that the reprint was at Aberdeen in 1757, and that the book was to be sold by John Mitchell and George Laurence, merchants in Old Deer.

A careful perusal of Pitnacadell's Psalms, as they were called, any lover of poetry will make but once. There is certainly a wide range of subject, and the passages of Scripture selected are among the grandest in the Bible. As they stand in our authorised version they are pure poetry, inspiring and imperishable. Had they been chosen and put together in this form, and chanted without alteration, they must have elevated the spirit and educated the heart. They would have made up for the lack of a liturgy. But while the passages are chosen with appreciation, the treatment is execrable, and the evangelical amplifications are not improvements. The Scriptural hymns are immeasurably below Patrick Simson's songs. Simson's are at times vigorous and happy. In Pitnacadell there is not a stanza one would wish to quote, except as a warning—there is not a felicitous phrase, or one touch which thrills. Had Skinner, who was a true poet, turned his satire against Pitnacadell, writer of hymns, he could have cut both keen and deep. It is undesirable to give many passages. The weakness of a strong man need not be dwelt upon, but to justify the severity of this criticism the rendering of Isaiah xxxii. is here quoted:—

Behold, a King to be adored,
 In righteousness shall reign,
 And princes subject unto Him
 Shall rule and justice bring.

And then a Man of matchless might
 A hiding-place shall be
 From wind of whatsoever airt,
 By His divinity.

And He a covert sure shall be
 From tempests of God's wrath,
 As reconciling Him to men
 By merit of His death.

As rivers of pure water He
 Shall be in a dry place,
 And living water plenteously
 Shall flow from His rich grace.

And He resemble shall the shade
 Of a great rock to you ;
 Resort to Him when hot and tired,
 And ye shall find this true.

Another familiar and sublime verse of the same prophet :—“ Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? Yea, they may forget,” is translated into this :—

But can a woman so forget
 Her sucking child that she
 Should cease compassion on the son
 Of her own womb, think ye ?
 Yea, this may even come to pass,
 And possible it is,
 But thou hast no such thing to fear
 In Me, O child, as this.

Taking the whole body of these “ Scriptural Hymns,” one is grieved to say there is not a breath of poetry, not a line dwells in the memory or lingers in the ear. They are without force as well as without inspiration, and they could only have been produced and tolerated in an unmusical and prosaic age.

The “ Appendix wherein the late INNOVATION in CHURCH MUSICK is particularly considered,” is much more interesting than the Hymns. It is clear, vigorous, and scholarly. Its weakest passages provoke a smile, for Presbyterians and other folk have travelled far since 1757. “ A loud voice is the sign of high esteem, and of a warm heart, in a spiritually-minded man: no doubt, but sometimes bodily infirmity, and sometimes grief, or slavish fear, or a doubtful mind may make the voice low, or the spiritually-minded musician sing low or even fall silent; but such a disability as that is his grief and lamentation, and according to the propensity of a fervent heart, he desires to

sing loud to God, his strength, with joy." As was to be expected, he is utterly impatient of instrumental or "organical" music. He quotes Bellarmine, Suarez, and Peter Martyr, and he condemns, with all his wonted severity, "the imitators of the Popish worship who stand on the Protestant side."

The NEW MODE, which provoked the Appendix, was a more rapid fashion of singing than the old, and the notes when sung were not dwelt upon. It is specially obnoxious, "as excluding a timely quavering . . . which is that vibration or shaking of the voice, and prolonging of the note which is gratifying to the sweetness of the meditation on divine things."

He finds a curious Scriptural argument for quavering. In Solomon's Song it is written: "The time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land." Plainly believers are likened to singing birds. "Now it is notour that the singing birds do quaver, such as the lark and others, and though the dove is not accounted a singing bird, yet her voice is quavering and she sings in her kind." Mr. Forbes has yet another argument still more wonderful. This is based upon the use of the larynx. "The use of this is to form the voice, and the voice is formed by the frequent re-percussion of the air, which we strike in order to express our thoughts, and the repeated re-percussion of air is attended with a vibrassive, shaking, or quavering sound." After those flights it is a light task to prove that the "Innovation" is contrary to an Act of Assembly, 1713, "especially where the vocal musick is ushered in by the Pitch-pipe." He sees "great indecency in reformed Protestants calling tunes St. Ann's and St. Mary's," and this leads to a discussion of the veneration of saints generally. He confesses that he has to grieve over "some valuable acquaintances who had yielded to the importunities of magistrates or heritors in consenting to the late change of music in their churches."

Forbes as a preacher is a very different person from Forbes the hymn-writer and eccentric controversialist. His style is not only clear and vigorous, but striking and even musical. The study of the character of Joseph of Arimathea, to which he gave the title, already quoted, of *The Eminent Character of a Judge*, is a very fine sermon. It bears, without doubt, traces of the controversies of the time, but there is a vein of spiritual insight, a depth of religious conviction, a certain mild persuasiveness, in fine, a sense of the eternal realities: and all this draws us to the man. Few sermons from that arid epoch of our annals will so abundantly repay perusal. As a matter of course he credits Joseph of Arimathea with some apprehension of the Evangelical scheme of doctrine, but the substance of the sermon is catholic and human, and it abounds in fine touches. "In the darkest evenings of Christ's cause, and of the Church's cause, He has some friends that wax bold to speak and act for Him, who, perhaps, had been timorous in the day-time; and these are marked by Him with honour." "Joseph, under a conviction of this necessity, and that he owed all to the merit of His death, used his interest with Pilate to get the Blessed Body in his arms. And how happy he,

when having such an armsfull by faith and sense at once." "Justice is as the salt of goodness, and goodness sweetens the bitter waters of justice." "I said goodness is not only free but forward ; it is, in a holy and sanctified man, bent to express itself. It hastens the justice of reward, and is leisurely or deliberate in proceeding to the justice of punishment. It inclines a man to give much to him that wants, and addition of more to him that hath but little. It forgives injuries done to himself who is thus sanctified, and interposes for a redress of such as are done to others. It answers the call of a needy condition, and prevents the cry of the poor. It is forward and breaks out like lightning from a heart warmed with the love of God, and sweetened with the sense of mercy. It flows down in acts of compassion and condescension like waters in *spout* bearing all before it. Nothing can stand in its way, no not the evil and ingratitude of men : 'God is good and doth good,' and overcomes men's evil with his goodness ; and 'tis the genius of goodness in the sanctified creature to imitate this pattern and perfection." *The Lawful Use of the Law* is more ambitious, more elaborate, and much more controversial. It is a sermon expanded into a small treatise. It is scholarly, and shows a man given both to reading and meditation. There is a strain of special severity towards ministers who do not press home evangelical doctrine, and who endeavour to make too much of the *Epistle of James*, and to form a style after the manner of Tillotson. It is dedicated, in the high-flown manner of the age, to the enigma—rather, perhaps, the Jekyll and Hyde—of the Scottish Church life of that time, James Erskine of Grange, Esq., who in 1734 had resigned his post as a Judge in the Court of Session to remain in Parliament as member for Stirlingshire. "As the famed Roman Senator, illustrious in history for having demitted his interest or authority in the Senate, that, for the service of the Commonwealth, he might come to the Bar, [you] have, *in like manner* passed from your seat in the Court, where statutes are only *applied*, to that supreme one, where *Laws are framed*."

It would be difficult in any history to find a parallel to the deep duplicity of Lord Grange. His hypocrisy was so far-reaching, and his piety was so skilfully acted, that the really religious never suspected the unscrupulous plotter, hardened unbeliever, and foul profligate who hid behind the mask.

Forbes's dedication is a fresh proof "of the high favour in which he was held by the stricter Presbyterians." Oddly enough Grange,* as Lord Justice Clerk, had acted as peace-maker after the Rabble of Deir in 1711.

Towards the close of *The Lawful Use of the Law* are three counsels for the maintenance of ecclesiastical authority, which may not be over-profound, but the need for them remains. "Limited and lawful authority may be maintained, 1st,

*A very full account of this James Erskine, who was a brother of the Jacobite leader, the eleventh Earl of Mar, will be found in vol. viii. of Hill Burton's *History of Scotland*. The article in the *Dictionary of National Biography* is most interesting and complete, but it does not chronicle Erskine's part in the peaceful settlement of Mr. Gordon at Deir.—A. L.

by taking as great care that ecclesiastic laws be good as that they be obeyed : for harmony accompanies holiness ; 2ndly, by the brotherly manner of endeavouring to convince one's judgment that the statute is good, in order to his forming his practice in a conformity to it, with a good conscience ; 3rdly, by a brotherly forbearance in these cases wherein conviction cannot be reached, if that can consist with the edification of the Church in things pertaining to order and economy."

No special record remains of the later years of his life. Towards the close of his ministry, on April 26, 1762, there was a measurement of the parish church of the day. It was found to measure sixty-nine feet eleven inches on the south side, where were two doors, and sixty-nine feet two inches on the north side, where was no door, while the west side of the aisle measured twenty-one feet two inches, the east measured an inch less, and there was no door on either side.



CRICHIE HOUSE.

The various heritors had allocated to them so much space by measurement according to their valued rent, and they were expected to put in pews for themselves where these did not already exist.

Certain parish traditions about Forbes still linger. He was wont to christen children with water from a well in the farthest field of the glebe, near the present public road, and the well was long called by his name—"Pitnacadell's Well." It was likewise his custom on Sundays to stand upon a knoll in the old manse-garden now the field nearest the Bridge of Deir, and to bless his departing

parishioners with outstretched hands until the last of them had passed out of sight. His courage and persistence, as well as his mental vigour and high character, advanced the cause of toleration. Men are more willing to bear and forbear, when the tyrannical Old Adam has got a good drubbing. He died on April 29, 1769.

Mr. Forbes was not three months dead, and the charge was still vacant, when a fresh ecclesiastical division took place in the parish. There were already Presbyterians and Episcopalians, and Episcopalians of two colours. The seceders in the Clola district now formed a congregation. Whether rumour had said that the new parish minister was to be a Moderate, or the number of seceding residents had so increased that a church was a necessity, cannot be determined. The Clola members petitioned the kirk-session of Craigdam in July, 1769, and the petition for a church was sanctioned by the Associate Synod of Perth in August. Probationers officiated for a time, and on November 19, 1770, Mr. William Mitchell was ordained, beginning a long and honoured ministry, which only closed in April, 1832. While an Associate congregation was thus forming partly through the influence of the Kinmundy family (who have thus a connection of a century and a half with Scottish Nonconformity), Mr. Forbes' successor was being objected to, on the ground that he could not be heard in the church. He was CHARLES KEAY, son of the laird of Snaigo, in Forfarshire. The objectors to his settlement were neither numerous nor influential—at least, none such came forward—and the specific objection was found by the Presbytery to be groundless. Mr. Keay was ordained on 14th December, 1769, and, after a ten-years' ministry, he was translated to Coupar-Angus, where he died in May, 1807.

BASIL ANDERSON, a somewhat florid preacher, whose uncommon Christian name was bestowed upon many of the infant members of his flock, was ordained 25th November, 1779. He had been licensed by the Presbytery of Selkirk five years before. The present church was built about the middle of his incumbency. "In 1788, the year previous to building the new church, there were found in the parish 3267 persons, of whom

2305	were of the Church of Scotland,			
721	"	"	England,	
12	"	"	Rome,	
and 229 were Anti-burgher Seceders."				

Fetterangus then had but 81 inhabitants, Deir 166, Stuartfield 181. The *Old Statistical Account*—from which these facts are taken—was written either towards the close of 1793 or in 1794, during Mr. Anderson's ministry. He died, after a number of years of failing health, on 16th June, 1797.

JOHN CRAIGIE, M.A., was, like Pitnacadell, a vigorous and commanding personality, but of a very different stamp. He was ordained to St. Fergus in

1773, where he had a great reputation for eccentricity as well as for capability. It is reported that on his presentation to St. Fergus the members of Presbytery thought to void his nomination by a stringent examination, but his scholarship stood the test, and he humorously suggested that "if they had any more bukies which they could not read themselves, they might hand them over to him." Mr. Craigie was credited with being High Church in his notions. He was settled in this parish in 1798, and proved himself a Moderate of the well-known type, an accomplished man of the world, a favourite in society, a ready speaker, and an enthusiastic farmer. On 9th August, 1803, at the time of Napoleon's threatened invasion, the Session record runs:—"This being the day appointed for the parishioners to meet and enroll themselves for the defence of the country, 450 were enrolled. The minister preached [from] Psalm cxxxvii. 5, 6,"—a good text for a patriotic sermon. Many stories are told of him. It is to be hoped they are exaggerations. He is the hero of the Presbytery enquiry in Dean Ramsay, where the elder confesses that "long before the minister was half slockened, he was blin' fou." In St. Fergus there used to be a tradition that the more convivial he was on the Saturday, the better he preached on Sunday. One of the most favourable reminiscences is a humorous counsel to Pitfour, who had drawn out a long set of regulations for his tenantry. He read the scheme over to the minister. "Do you keep all the Commandments?" "No," said Pitfour. "Neither will your tenants keep all these regulations." Yet the logic here is inferior to the wit, and there is an opening for a dangerous retort. Failings, like virtues, get magnified by distance, and a kind of mythological haze is apt to invest the career of all men of bigger mould than the common. Mr. Craigie died in October, 1821, and he is the only minister who is buried and commemorated within the Pre-Reformation Church.

Mr. Craigie's ministry had scarce begun when Mr. Skinner of Longside, attempted to heal the Episcopal divisions in Deir. The Toleration Act of 1792 had greatly improved the position of Episcopalians, and the attitude of the Church of England had changed with the times. There had been no continuous congregation under the native Bishop since Skinner's imprisonment. Mr. Skinner wrote a calm and forcible, in some passages a most touching and dignified letter, of date 1st February, 1798, to the Episcopal congregation, in order to persuade them to break off their English connection and unite with the Scottish Episcopal Church. His reasoning did not altogether prevail, probably because it admitted of no answer, and yet compliance with his counsel would have been specially gratifying, for his son had already succeeded Bishop Kilgour in the diocese of Aberdeen. Mr. Skinner's letter created the Stuartfield Episcopal congregation—those members of the qualified congregation, who admitted its justness, having come once more under the supervision of the Bishop. The two Episcopal congregations struggled on apart for a time with fluctuating fortunes and with one marked calamity, in consequence of which a secession took place from the Stuartfield

flock in 1810, when the seceding members were organised into a Congregational Church by the brothers Haldane. "The first minister of this Church," writes the Rev. W. Lloyd Robinson, the present incumbent, "was the Rev. William Robertson, who emigrated to America in 1834. Though poorly paid, he gave the whole of his large family an excellent education, and that he might be able to meet the expense of this he worked hard with his hands as well as with his head. He cut his own peats and dug his own garden. One of his daughters was the mother of Professor William Robertson Smith." Another daughter, Margaret, who became an authoress, is duly commemorated in our chapter on Parish Worthies. The Rev. J. A. Pratt, afterwards of Cruden, the historian of Buchan, was in charge of the Stuartfield Episcopal congregation from 1821-1825. The two Episcopal congregations were united in 1831 during the brief ministry of Mr. Ralph Anderson, which closed in 1834, to be followed by the long incumbency of Dean Ranken.

The year of Mr. Craigie's death saw not only the settlement of Mr. Pratt as Episcopal minister at Stuartfield, but a split in the Clola Associate congregation. Clola belonged to the Anti-burgher Synod—"Eh ! but they were real narrow, the Anti's," said the venerable Dr. Lind, of Elgin, to the present writer, "they once *sessioned* a member for listening to a Burgher preacher through a hedge." Mr. Mitchell of Clola would not fall in with this union, and in consequence of his refusal, six of his elders and a portion of his people advanced the cause of unity by a new secession, which is now represented by the U.P. congregation at Stuartfield, of which the earliest minister was Mr. Allison, whose faithfulness and high character are still held in affectionate remembrance in the parish. Mr. Mitchell had from 1829, as colleague, Mr. Thomas M'Crie, the distinguished son of an illustrious father. He continued until 1835, when he was called to succeed his father as Professor of Divinity to the Associate Synod. He was succeeded by a younger brother, Mr. George M'Crie, who first came to the parish as tutor to the present Laird of Kinmundy. He was much beloved in the district, and was a man of great social gifts, a poet too, and author of an epic. He and his congregation, with the majority of the Original Secession Church, joined the Free Church in 1852. He died in 1878.

In spite of these manifold divisions the large body of the people continued to adhere to the Parish Church. In July, 1806—the middle point of Mr. Craigie's ministry—there were at communion upwards of 1,500 communicants ; and there were eight tables. It was, therefore, over a very large flock, as well as to a very large parish, that JOHN MORRISON, A.M., was ordained in 4th July, 1822. He was born at Newmill of Keith in 1782, and graduated at Marischal College in 1806. He was immediately thereafter appointed schoolmaster of Rothiemay, and had there as a pupil James Cruickshank, afterwards Professor of Mathematics in Marischal College. He became, after a short time, tutor or preceptor, to the family of David Macdowall Grant of Arndilly. He lived with the boys at Marischal

College, as well as at their home, and although his worth and conscientiousness were admired, he was, as a tutor, "very severe and exacting." While at Arndilly he was licensed at Boharm by the Presbytery of Aberlour on 22nd August, 1811. The impression he made upon his neighbours may be gauged by the fact that the minister of Boharm left him one of his trustees and guardian of his daughter, now the widow of the Very Rev. Principal Pirie. Coming to the parish with ripe experience and a fully-formed character Mr. Morrison early held the key of the parochial position, and his sagacity, firmness, disinterestedness, and quiet humour told in every aspect of his ministry. The present manse was built for him, and during his incumbency chapels-of-ease were built at Savoch and at Kininmonth, Savoch being made a parish *quoad sacra* in 1851. Mr. Morrison



THE MANSE OF DEIR.

was eminently a man of affairs, and he designed a parish of Ardallie—a project completed after his death, part of the endowment being provided by a legacy which he bequeathed. The first minister of Ardallie was the Rev. William Burgess, M.A., Mr. Morrison's grandnephew. He had the side schools made into parish schools, and he was one of the original governors of the schools under the Mitchell Bequest. He was a calm but firm opponent of the Non-Intrusion movement which ended in the Disruption of 1843, but he was not able to prevent a minority of his people from joining the Free Church and forming a congregation at Quartalehouse, under the ministry of the Rev. Alexander Urquhart, a member of an old Scottish ecclesiastical family, who still survives in an eminently honoured and attractive

old age. Mr. Morrison had the farm of Bridgend as well as the glebe and parish under his care. A drunken miller is said to have impudently asked him on one occasion "whether the preaching or the farming was paying best," to which he calmly replied, "both were paying better than a standing mill." He was accounted a solid but a "dry" preacher, and two sermons of his on the duties of master and servant, published by request in 1845, are equally remarkable for sound practical sense and for extraordinary complexity of style. The sentences are almost as long and involved as if Immanuel Kant had composed them. Older folk say that when the first of the sermons—one specially addressed to servants—was preached, there was much openly expressed gratification on the part of the masters, but that on the following Sunday, when the counsels to the masters were delivered, the satisfaction was altogether of the silent sort. Mr. Morrison was for some time in weak health before his death, and the last sermon which he preached, almost a year and a half before the end, was from the text, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." James Forbes, the teacher of John Phillip, R.A., painted his portrait in his old age. This portrait, by the generosity of Mr. John Burgess, brother of the late minister of Ardallie, is now the property of the kirk-session of Deir. Even one who never saw him, or knew aught of the man save by report, cannot fail to be struck by the serenity and calm force of the countenance. It is a singularly pleasing and yet a commanding face. Mr. Morrison, in addition to his bequest to the Church of Ardallie, left a legacy, which is more particularly referred to in our chapter on Education. He died on 6th June, 1854.

A few years before Mr. Morrison's death, the Episcopal congregation, now for long united under the ministry of Dean Ranken, erected their present beautiful church in the village. It is not only a chaste and complete little sanctuary, but it enjoys a unique distinction among Scottish churches. It has a memorial window to John Graham of Claverhouse. ARTHUR RANKEN was born at New Pittsigo in 1806, and graduated at Aberdeen in 1826. He was ordained deacon by Bishop Skinner in 1828, and priest in the following year. He had the charge of Portsoy until 1834, when he was called to S. Drostan's, and during his long ministry he was held in great affection not only by his own flock, but by the great body of the parishioners. He was Synod Clerk and Examining Chaplain to the Bishop. On the impeachment of the Rev. Patrick Cheyne for the doctrine of his *Eucharistic Sermons*, Mr. Ranken was an earnest defender and sympathiser. Like Mr. Peter, he was an enthusiastic antiquary and an eager student of place-names. He was made a Doctor of Divinity by his own University in 1855, being the first clergyman of his Church who received this honour after the Revolution Settlement.

Mr. URQUHART was born at Alford, but spent a considerable portion of his early life in Keith, where his father was in practice as a doctor. His ancestors were ministers at Tough, and he began his own ministry in 1840 in the Isle of

Sanday. He was translated to this parish in December, 1844, and came to a flock of forty members. Ere his ministry closed there were four hundred, and from the congregation there had gone out, under his training, no fewer than six ministers of the Free Church, one of them his own son, now at Old Meldrum, who is of the seventh generation in the Scottish ministry.

JAMES PETER, M.A., F.S.A., succeeded Mr. Morrison. He was born at Canterland, in St. Cyrus, on 1st August, 1823. He studied at Gordon's College under Dr. Findlater, and at Marischal College, graduating in 1841. He was shortly thereafter appointed parish schoolmaster of Foveran. He studied divinity during his tenure of office, and was licensed by the Presbytery of Ellon. He was assistant at Glenbervie, and afterwards at Monymusk, to which latter parish the people desired his appointment. Mr. Peter came as assistant to Mr. Morrison in March, 1853, and on Mr. Morrison's death a large majority of the congregation petitioned Lord Palmerston, the Home Secretary, for his settlement as minister. The living was in the gift of the Crown. Admiral Ferguson took charge of the petition, which was granted, and Mr. Peter was ordained on 29th November, 1854. Mr. Peter carried on the work of the parish on the same practical lines as his predecessor. He was indefatigable in his labours for the poor, for education, and for church-extension. He was at one time chairman of the Parochial Board, and, living to see the old parochial school-system exchanged for the reign of the School Board, he was for many years chairman of this body as well. He was largely instrumental in the erection of the present Girls' School, to which he eventually bequeathed a legacy of two hundred pounds.

He assisted in the work of endowing the parish of Ardallie, and had chapels-of-ease built at Maud and at Fetterangus. Through his efforts the present fine Parish Church tower, designed by Sir George Reid, P.R.S.A., was erected by the congregation, when the heritors reseated the church. Indeed, of few ministers could it more truly be said that his life was in the service of his parish. He was always a public servant, with a single eye to the public good, and he was as disinterested by nature as in service. Mr. Peter was an antiquary, a lover of art, and of gardening, and during his ministry the Manse of Deir was a favourite haunt of some of our most distinguished Scottish artists. In the recently published volume on "George Paul Chalmers, R.S.A., and the Art of His Time," by Edward Pinnington, a record is given to the world of an institution called "The Aberdeen Academy," which used to enjoy the hospitality of the Manse under Mr. Peter's genial presidency. "We were all at Mr. Peter's yesterday," wrote Mr. Chalmers in the spring of 1877, "and had a *great* day and evening." The "Academicians" included Mr. (now Sir) George Reid, President of the Royal Scottish Academy, Professor Robertson Smith, Mr. (now Sir) David Gill, Astronomer Royal at the Cape; Dr. John Forbes White, Mr. A. D. Reid, and Dr. John Kerr, Inspector of Schools. He had a skilful pencil himself, and he was drawn to those who were masters in the craft. His most elaborate contributions to antiquarian

lore are a small volume on "The Peat Mosses of Buchan," and a paper on "The Stone Circles of the Parish." Mr. Peter died in August, 1886. Everywhere in the parish one finds the impression of a character of singular charm and of unwearied benevolence, and the breath of a spirit which sought to rule by love.

Dean Ranken, with the different tradition and outlook of the Scottish Episcopal Church, was just such another as Mr. Peter in aim and intention, as well as in labour and life. He was much affected by his friend's death, and in a few weeks followed him to the land of light, after a ministry of fifty-two years. Mr. Urquhart, of the Free Church, who still survives, lived to rejoice in his jubilee, although he had withdrawn from active service, and one is permitted to say that the cordial friendship and mutual esteem of these three Presbyters in diverse branches of the Church of Christ were among the best influences in Deir in the past generation. Sometimes, as one studies the story of bygone times, the good that is at hand receives but scanty recognition. Our parish has a long record, and it has seen the Christian energy of many different types of men. Among its blessings it rarely has had one more worthy of hearty thanksgiving than the ministry at one time and for a whole generation of

ARTHUR RANKEN, ALEXANDER URQUHART, AND JAMES PETER.



THE MANSE GARDEN.

CHAPTER IX.

Education and Relief of the Poor.

(*By Robert Wilson,* Esq., Emeritus Schoolmaster of Deir,
with additions by the Editor.*)

PREVIOUS to the Reformation there seems to have been in this quarter no provision for education save at the Abbey, and there the scholars were the novices and younger monks who had to be trained for the service of the Church. That there were other scholars here, as elsewhere, may be taken for granted, but as to their numbers, station, and acquirements we are in utter ignorance. One may hope that Dene Robert Stevenson, to whom Ferrerius paid so high a compliment, encouraged the studious of pregnant parts, whether they were clerics or laymen. After the Reformation the clergy, whatever their faults, were zealous beyond praise in the cause of education, and among our regrets for by-gone misfortune, none may well be more sincere than that which we feel for the partial failure of Knox's magnificent scheme for the instruction of the youth of the country. Had greed but permitted its realisation, many troubles would have passed by, or never have arisen.

In 1608 the Presbytery of Deir ordered a school to be planted, but in spite of this order there was none in 1609, because the parish was too large. There is mention of a schoolmaster in 1613, and the Presbytery minutes record the praiseworthy efforts of the charitable persons by whom he is maintained. In 1615, the year prior to an Act laying the burden of maintaining a parish school upon the "parochinars," John Brown was appointed schoolmaster. In the following year he was likewise employed as assistant to Mr. Sibbald, and there was a threatening of trouble, because upon his appointment to the new paroche of Deir, he wished to retain his post as schoolmaster. What effect the statute of 1633—"which enacted that 'every plough or husband land, according to the worth,' should be assessed for the maintenance and establishment of schools"—had upon our parochial instruction cannot be ascertained, as the Presbytery and Session records of the time are lost, but this we know for certain, that in 1649, during the ministry of Robert Keith, George Clark was schoolmaster. In the Poll-Book of 1696 there is no mention of a schoolmaster. Presumably the office was vacant. The Act of the Scottish Parliament of 1694 made parish schools obligatory everywhere.

* MR. WILSON, who had been parish schoolmaster of Dyce from 3rd January, 1845, was appointed to the school of Deir on 24th January, 1850, and taught with signal success until September, 1889, when he retired.—A. L.

The parish school originally stood close by the east wall of the churchyard, where is now the Aden lower garden, and, if we judge by what remains, it must have provided but moderate accommodation for so populous a parish. The present school site was acquired in 1803. The area betwixt the old parish school and the bend of the Ugie was used as a playground, and was known by the name of the Butts, a memorial of the time when there was archery practice.

Prior to 1750, in Pitnacadell's ministry, a Mr. Urquhart was schoolmaster and session clerk. He was succeeded by William Perry on 3rd July, and in 1755 Mr. Perry petitioned the session to reinstate him in his right to the pew of his predecessor, Mr. Clark, in the church, and his petition contains an extract minute from the session-records of 1649. Two James Taylors, father and son, followed, the young man going eventually to the West Indies as a preacher. During the latter half of Mr. Basil Anderson's ministry George Cruden, M.A., a former pupil of the school and a native of the parish, was settled as schoolmaster. He was born at Waulkmill of Pitfour, of which his father was tenant. His father afterwards established a carding-mill and cloth factory at Milladen, where are the present well-known woollen mills. Mr. Cruden was a ripe scholar and an excellent teacher. As has been mentioned, he wrote the *Old Statistical Account*. He left the parish school in 1803 to fill the office of writing and arithmetic master in the Aberdeen Town's School, became minister of Logie-Buchan a few years afterwards, and died in 1850. Mr. Cruden was succeeded by Alexander Webster, M.A., a native of Inverkeithny, who had been trained by Mr. Morrison there, a famous teacher of the time. The School Act of 1803 added considerably to the schoolmaster's income. The old salary had been from £8 to £9, together with the school fees. It was raised to £31 7s. 6d. Mr. Webster had many distinguished pupils, among them James Smith, afterwards schoolmaster of Keith, the first of a line of eminent teachers there. Another pupil of Mr. Webster's has pre-eminently distinguished himself in commerce, and has signally benefited his native parish. This is Mr. George Smith, of Chicago.

Side schools of the adventure order existed for some time at Shannas and Clochean. These were in 1832 made parochial schools by the heritors of the parish, and shared in the Dick and Milne Bequests.

There was at least one dame-school at the hamlet of Durie, on the Kinmundy estate, taught by one of those heroic spirits who are the glory of our Scottish peasantry. Miss Barbara Walker—"Baubie," as the whole country-side affectionately calls her—is still alive and in her ninety-third year. Her life-story is here given as communicated by the kind courtesy of Mr. Ferguson of Kinmundy. "She became resident at Durie about 1816. Though by no means strong, and with only one arm, she supported herself for long by bread-baking. On the death of Mrs. Mary Taylor, who conducted a small school in her little cottage, Barbara took up the work, and for many years carried it on. She thoroughly indoctrinated her scholars with the Bible and the Shorter Catechism, as well as

grounded them in reading. Some of her scholars, without more education than they received in the little one-room thatched cottage at Durie, have risen to posts of usefulness in the world; and they still remember with affection and respect their old teacher. She has been confined to her house for sixty years—since 1836—and latterly for some years to her bed. She retains all her faculties, and maintains a bright, patient, Christian composure amidst much suffering. Her days are brightened by the visits of many sympathising and loving friends, both young and old, to whom her example and conversation are a stimulus and encouragement."

Mr. Webster died in 1839, and was succeeded by the Rev. James Cruden, a son of Mr. George Cruden. He came from Pitsligo, and was in 1842 ordained minister of Tyrie. He was afterwards minister of Gamrie, a parish in which his maternal ancestors had ministered for three successive generations. The Rev. Alexander Milne, the present venerable and accomplished incumbent of Tough, was teacher from 1842 to 1844. His successor was William Cruickshank, M.A., from Maryculter, who taught until 1849. He was a licentiate of the Church, and preached often at Savoch, so long as it was a chapel-of-ease. He went to Canada, and held a ministerial charge until his death in 1888.

The praiseworthy efforts of the heritors were supplemented in various ways. Mr. Morrison in the *New Statistical Account* says "there is rarely wanting a person keeping an adventure school in Stuartfield." Mr. James Mitchell, factor for the Pitfour Estates, built and partly endowed a Girls' School in Fetterangus. Mr. Russell of Aden for many years maintained an Episcopal School in the village of Deir, and afterwards at Stuartfield. The Disruption, which led to a Free Church at Quartalehouse, gave also a Free Church school, very much through the exertions of Mr. John Ferguson, Brae of Coynach, and the minister Mr. Urquhart. Among the teachers of the Free Church School were Mr. David Ewart, now Inspector of Schools in Queensland, and the Rev. Andrew Chalmers, of Wakefield, the generous benefactor of Fetterangus. The educational machinery was still further augmented by the erection of a Girls' School beside the Parish School in 1861, mainly through the energy of Mr. Peter. This school continued, under the management of the kirk-session and the proprietors of Pitfour and Kinmundy, until 1873, when the School Board took over the entire education of the parish. There are now six schools within the ecclesiastical parish, and, if we take the civil domain as in 1696, there are eight, besides a large combined school close to the parish border at Maud.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS.—Besides the Dick and Milne Bequests—common to the whole of the county—there are local endowments of some consequence.

Mr. Alexander Shirras, of Charleston, U.S.A., by his will in 1810, left to the parish school here, where he had been educated, one thousand dollars, the interest of which was to be applied to the purchase of mathematical instruments and books for the use of the scholars. This realised in 1812 the sum of £225 sterling.

By careful management this increased, and the trustees were able, after yearly fulfilling the purposes of the trust, to hand over in 1888 a capital sum of £500 to the trustees appointed by the Endowed Schools Commission.

Dr. George Watt, who practised long as a surgeon in Aberdeen, left by will, in 1839, the feu-duty of a park near Aberdeen, amounting to £41, or thereby, yearly, for paying school fees of poor children at any school in the parish, the Parish School always to be preferred. His trustees were also empowered to pay apprentice fees, a most useful and helpful species of benevolence, which the Endowed Schools Commissioners brought to an end. Mr. Morrison and Mr. Peter both left legacies for the education of girls, the one £250 and the other £200, while small bequests of £5 and £20 were left by Mr. John Rettie at Park-house, and Mr. Alexander Davidson at Benwells, for the purchase of books for poor children attending the Girls' School in the village of Deir. The Shirras, Watt, and Morrison Bequests were united in 1888 as the Educational Trust, and a governing body was appointed after the usual fashion of the Endowed Schools Commission.

Much the most important educational benefaction has been given by Mr. George Smith, of Chicago. Mr. Smith's generosity to his native parish began in September, 1868, with a gift of five thousand dollars for "the purpose of encouraging a healthy emulation in and among the schools of the parish." He constituted a trust in Mr. Peter, Mr. Urquhart, and Mr. Ranken (and their successors in office), Mr. Ferguson of Kinmundy, and Dr. James Cooper, then, and for a generation before, the popular and highly-esteemed medical man of the parish. Mr. Smith has, from time to time, added to the capital fund—his most recent donation, amounting to £2,000, having been conveyed to his present trustees in 1893. The entire capital of the trust now amounts to £9,000, and the annual revenue, so far as it is required, is given in money prizes to boys and girls educated at any school in Old Deer, the original old paroche of Deir, after a competitive examination held annually in August. The trustees have power, on the occasion of vacancies, to assume additional members, and they are strictly limited in their application of the trust funds. "If the revenue of the funds shall be diverted from the purposes set forth in the deeds of gift, or shall not be administered in terms thereof, then the whole trust fund shall *ipso facto* revert to the donor's nearest of kin, who shall be entitled, and are hereby empowered in that event, to sue for and recover from my said trustees and their successors, not only the revenue of the bonds hereby assigned to them, but the principal sums therein, with the said bonds themselves, and the titles and whole vouchers of the trust fund, all to be applied by them for their own behoof." There are bursaries as well as money prizes, and the whole scheme aims at the encouragement of classical, modern, and religious knowledge, as well among girls as boys. The income from the last gift of £2,000 has been, with Mr. Smith's sanction, specially applied to promote the study of book-keeping, elementary science, and geome-

trical drawing among boys likely to turn their attention to engineering or similar practical pursuit, and among girls to give direction to any who may wish to enter the Civil Service.

RELIEF OF THE POOR.—In this as in other parishes in Scotland, prior to the Poor Law Act of 1845, the poor were maintained by the church-door collections, augmented by the charitable donations of the specially benevolent. Individual heritors often gave sums, considerable for the time, in seasons of special distress, in cases of accident, or unlooked-for calamity, and private persons gave gifts by way of thanksgiving, often also in times of mourning and bereavement. Pitnacadel's widow gave a donation to the poor's box ; so did Basil Anderson's. The old session account-book is both clear and full, and the record of the paltry sums which were sometimes voted—one shilling Scots, for example—is a pathetic revelation of the exceeding poverty of the people. Janet Wright gets an allowance of one shilling and sixpence Scots on going to, and a shilling on her returning from Pananich Wells.

In the year 1753 the ordinary church collections amounted to £7 3s. 4d. sterling, and the Communion offerings to £7 0s. 2d.—a total of £14 3s. 6d.—of which £14 0s. 9d. was given to the poor. In 1773, in Mr. Keay's ministry, the ordinary collections were £18 11s. sterling, and the Communion offering £11 11s. sterling—in all £30 2s., of which the poor received £26 10s. Members under discipline were fined, and the better mortcloth was let out for payment, and these sums went into the poor's box. As prior to 1848 there was no bank nearer than Peterhead, the capital sums in the hands of the session were often lent to the several heritors who were willing to be of service in this respect. There were lands mortified for the poor. On Sunday, December 9, 1798, it is intimated to the tenants of Deir to meet to choose trustees for the mortified lands. On the following Sunday a similar intimation is made to the tenants on the lands of Dens, Kinnadie, and Knock, and the villagers of Stuartfield, to meet at the Mill of Crichie to choose their trustees for the ensuing year. These last met under the will of Mr. Burnett of Dens and Crichie, and with these managers were joined three others chosen by the kirk-session. By Mr. Burnett's will the rents of Andieswells and Backhill were to be applied for the relief of the poor upon his estates, so long as there was no legal assessment.

In addition to the ordinary collections in the Parish Church, which, immediately before the passing of the Poor Law Act, in 1845, ranged from £11 to £14 per quarter, there were special collections in all the churches for the lunatic poor. The first Parochial Board was constituted on 2nd October, 1845, and resolved that meanwhile it was not necessary to have recourse to an assessment. Mr. Morrison was the first chairman, and Keith Hutchison, dyer at Waulkmill of Pitfour, was the first inspector of poor. The elders present were, besides the inspector, James Davidson, William Hunter, Stuart Anderson, John Gall, Charles Reid, John Simpson, John Macgregor, and William Wildgoose. The capital in

hands of the session treasurer amounted to upwards of £1,200. In 1850 a legal assessment was levied for the first time, and the old method of relief ceased.

In common with other parishes of the Presbytery, the parish of Deir receives a share of the bequest by the late Mr. Bruce of Inverquhomery, which is distributed by the kirk-session twice a year. This amounts in all annually to £80, or thereby. There are, besides, a Cosmo Falconer Fund of £165, the interest of which is given to the poor not on the poor roll; a Shirras of Berryhill Fund of £180, which is by will specially destined for members of the Parish Church congregation, "and none others;" and two legacies each of £100, by Mrs. Jamieson, Stuartfield—one for a Stuartfield Coal Fund, and the other for charity, according to the pleasure of the kirk-session, provided a Cottage Hospital should not be built within a reasonable time. In few parishes are the poor better cared for, and the heritors, largely under the direction of Dr. James Cooper, added most effectively and thoughtfully to the humane relief of the poor when they built, in 1851, what is known as the Poor's Lodgings. This is a block of four dwelling-houses in the village of Deir, each under the management of a matron. In each house, besides the matron, from six to eight poor persons can be accommodated, and not only have old couples the privilege of living together, but the single poor people have separate rooms and meals. They thus enjoy all the liberty of their former life, and at the same time all the care, nursing, and general supervision of a well-ordered Poor-house.



CHAPTER X.

The Lands of the Parish and their Owners.

THE present civil parish territory is owned by twelve heritors, excluding feuars, and the Great North of Scotland Railway Company. Colonel Ferguson of Pitfour is the proprietor of the two halves of Pitfour, of the whole of Fetterangus, including Gaval, Cabra, and Auchrynie, of Toux and Brakeshill, Mains of Pitfour, Balring and Dunshillock, of Taitswell, Cartlehaugh, Saplinbrae, and Mains of Cuthill, of the Abbey of Deir, with its gardens and orchards, of Bruxie, and Mill of Bruxie, and what of old was the estate of Altrie, as well as of Auchinachar and Cairnochies. The gross rental of the parish, including Fetterangus, is £28,881, and the rental of Pitfour is £7,551. If we take the parsonage teind as a basis, Pitfour would represent a little more than a third. Kinmundy, the estate of William Ferguson, Esq., chairman of the Great North of Scotland Railway Company, so far as it lies within the Parish of Deir, embraces Coynach and Millbreck, Shannas, Durie, Clola, Millhill, Over-Kinmundy, Kin-knockie, Smallburn, and Pettymarcus. The rental is £3,780, and, alike in the teind and in the present valuation, it is almost one-half of Pitfour. Mr. Gordon, of Ellon, owns Skelnuir and the now forgotten property of Parcock, on which are Stonkhill, Windfold, Stodfauld, and what is now called Newton of Skelmuir. The rent, £2,305, is not quite two-thirds of Kinmundy, although the parsonage teind is four-fifths.

The property of Aden, besides Aden proper and Mill of Aden, embraces the "town and town lands of Deir," the several Biffies, and Parkhouse of Biffie—where the Abbey cows used to be kept—Bridgend and Aikey Brae, as well as the old and once separate estates of Bruntbrae and Clochcan. It is owned by Colonel F. S. Russell, M.P., and although the parsonage teind is but two-thirds of Parcock and Skelmuir, the gross rental is nearly £700 more, almost touching £3,000 per annum. Elrick and Annochie, belonging to the Aberdeen Educational Trust, are valued at £1,893; Dens and Crichie, owned by E. A. Burnett-Stuart, Esq., at £1,655; Clackriach (John Gordon of Murtle's Charitable Fund), at £1,426; West Crichie (Trustees of Robert Gordon's College), at £1,026; Knock, the property of Miss Buchan of Auchmacoy, £737; while Kinaldie, belonging to the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, gives £645 a year; Nethermuir, J. Dean Leslie, Esq., for Greenbrae, in this parish, yields £604; and Skillymarno, as part of the Strichen property of Mrs. Baird's Trustees, has a rent of £132. Knock and West Crichie, although so widely divergent in present rental, are valued alike in parsonage teind, and neither property pays any vicarage.

Two of our proprietors claim kin with the old territorial princes of the district. Miss Buchan of Auchmacoy and Knock is a lineal descendant of a Cumyn, who was compelled to change his name by King Robert II. Colonel Russell of Aden goes back to the Cumyn stock through his grandmother, who was a Miss Cumine of Kininmonth. One heritor has a family title as early as the very opening of the eighteenth century. The first Ferguson of Pitfour became a heritor in the parish in 1700.

The Book of Deir, as we have already seen, and as may be gathered from a careful reading of the entries in Appendix II., shows the land in the possession of the Celtic chiefs and their clansmen, after that fashion of joint ownership which has never quite lost its charm for the Celtic heart. King and earl, chief and cleric, and all the clansmen have a share, but absolute ownership, except in occasional gifts to the Church, seems unknown. The Celtic Monastery became possessed of the town of Deir, of Altrie, Auchmuchar, Skillymarno, Biffie, Quartalehouse, and the Glebe, and of many other possessions which we cannot now identify. With the thirteenth century the Cumyns gain possession of the greater portion. But they and the monks were not sole owners, for in 1246 William Pratt is proprietor of the Mill of Crichie, and he assigns from the rent four shillings a year for a stone of wax, as an offering to God, and the Blessed Virgin, and the monks of Deir. Among the witnesses is Walter of Perthoch, "my seneschal."

After the forfeiture of the Cumyns, it was not mere accident or royal caprice which settled the various great families, including the Keiths, in the district. William Cumyn, the Great Justiciar, and his wife Marjorie, Countess of Buchan in her own right, had four daughters—Elizabeth, who married the Earl of Mar; Jean, who married Gilbert de Haya, ancestor of the noble family of Erroll; Isabel, who married Francis, Lord Cheyne of Inverugie; and Marjorie, who married Sir John de Keith, Great Marischal of Scotland.

The great barony in the parish was the barony of Alden, and this became the property of the head of the house of Keith, by gift of King Robert the Bruce, in 1324. There was no great keep or stronghold here, like Dunnottar or Inverugie, not even a castle as important as the Castle of Fedderat. Prior to the Reformation the only house of consequence was the Abbot's house, and no trace of it remains. It is a question even where it stood, whether on the heights above the Mains of Cuthill which was the portion of the Abbey property specially in the Abbot's hands, or beside the convent buildings.

The lands of Pitfour were granted by charter in 1383 from King Robert II., to his illegitimate son, Alexander Stewart, who at the same time received the lands of Lunan, or Lownane, in Angus.

In 1477, these lands are still in the possession of Stewarts—for Egidai, or Giles Stewart, daughter and sole heiress of the late Walter Stewart of Burlie, Knight, sells, in her widowhood, *her half* of Pitfour to John Anderson, burgess in Aberdeen. The lands are to be held of the King for two silver pennies a year,

if it be asked. John Wormot, the same who was procurator for Abbot William in the plea about the seven barrels of salmon, is a witness to the Deed of Conveyance. In 1493 Walter Ruthven of Lunan conveyed all and whole the lands of Pitfour (presumably his half), with all their pertinents, to Walter Innes, son of Walter Innes of Invermarky; and in 1504 Thomas Innes, in the Cotts of Lanbride, bought John Anderson's half, while in 1507 Anderson acquired from Crauford of Fedderat all and whole his lands of Meikle Crichie, with all their pertinents in the lordship of Fedderat. Meikle Crichie is described as being bounded on the east by the lands of Little Crichie, belonging to the Earl of Marischal; on the north by Dens, belonging to the Abbot and Convent of Deir; on the west by the lands of Meikle Elrick, belonging to the same Abbot and Convent; and on the south by Crauford's own lands of Annochy. Four years later, John Anderson having apparently gone the way of all burgesses, King James IV. grants to the son, Robert Anderson, three quarter parts of Meikle Crichie, and to the said Robert, and Agnes Irwin his spouse, and their heirs, whom failing, to any lawful heirs of the said Robert, the remaining quarter part of Meikle Crichie.

In the year 1507 we get a glimpse of both halves of Pitfour. John Innes, son and heir of Thomas Innes, is confirmed in his father's estate, and the value of his half with its pertinents is said to be ten merks a year, and "that they did avail five pounds in time of peace." The other half of Pitfour, the property of Walter Innes, is, along with his lands of Toux, incorporated into a free barony of Toux. Much the most complete view of the lands of the parish, prior to the Reformation, is to be gathered from the series of documents already referred to as in the keeping of the University of Cambridge. Unfortunately the owners' names are not given. The first of these gives the rental of the Abbey lands, and the holdings are given separately. The lands in the old parish of Deir are:—

The KIRKTOWN, which is assessed at £4, and 6 dozen of fowls.

CLERKHILL at 30s., and 6 capons.

CORTHAULHOWS at £3 6s. 8d, 6 capons, 6 land fowls, 2 wedders, 2 bolls of horse corn.

WALKMILL at £3 6s. 8d, 12 fowls.

MILL OF CRICHIE at £6 13s 4d., 2 wedders, 24 capons.

DENS at £3 6s. 8d, 6 capons, 6 fowls, 2 wedders, 2 bolls of horse corn.

MEIKLE ELRICK at £10 13s. 4d., 12 capons.

LITTLE ELRICK at £4, 6 capons, 1 wedder.

Then follow certain lands now in the new paroche of Deir:—Meikle Auchreddie, Auchmunziel, Cairnbanno, Little Auchreddie, Craigmill, Badforsky, Achlek, and Atherb. Then the lands in our own parish are resumed.

CRYALLY assessed at £2 13s. 4d., 1 wedder, 6 capons, 2 bolls of horse corn.

SKELEMERNO at £4.

AUCHMACHAR at £6 13s. 4d., 2 wedders, and 2 dozen of capons.

ALTRY at £16, 4 wedders, 4 dozen of capons, 8 bolls of horse corn.

BIFFY at £16, 6 wedders, 4 dozen capons, and 12 bolls horse corn.

BENWALLS at £4 10s., 12 capons.

GLAKREACH at £6 13s. 4d.

Almad and Brucehill come next; then follow

MILL OF BRUXIE, which is valued at 36 bolls victual, 2 merks, 12 capons, 1 dozen other fowls, and a swine.

SCROGHILL is rated at £1 13s. 4d.. 12 capons, 2 wedders.

CUTHILL, in the hands of the Abbot, is reckoned to be worth eight chalders of victual, and the COTTARS OF CUTHILL are rated at £4 3s. 4d., and 6 dozen and 6 poultry.

Annual rents are paid for Little Crichie, presumably by the Earl Marischal, a sum of forty shillings, and for Twlkis or Toux £1 13s. 4d. by Walter Innes, or his successor. A rental of the parsonage teinds of the Parish of Deir gives a full view of the extent of the parochial territory, and indicates most clearly the number of separate holdings, and the relative value and size.

TOUX and CAIRNORCHIES were formerly rated at 8 merks, but are now estimated to be valued at 24 bolls victuals.

PITFOUR was rated at 32 bolls, 4 sheep, 24 poultry.

MILL OF PITFOUR, 3 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

ALDEN, 32 bolls, 4 sheep, 24 poultry.

KNOCK-KNOCKAILHOUSE, 24 bolls, 3 sheep, 18 poultry, from the Laird of Knock.

MILL OF AUDEN, 3 bolls, 2 firlots, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

LITTLE CRICHIE, 32 bolls, 4 sheep, 6 poultry.

CONYEIT, or COYNACH, 32 bolls, 4 sheep, 6 poultry.

MILLBRECK, 10 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

KINMUNDY, 16 bolls, 2 sheep, 16 poultry.

MILLHILL, 18 bolls, 2 sheep, 12 poultry.

PETTYMARKHOUSE, 6 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

KINKNOCKIE, 4 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

PERCOK, SKELMUIR, CORTIECRAM, HAWKHILLOCK (which is given, HALHILLOCK), at 24 bolls, 4 sheep, 24 poultry.

MEIKLE CRICHIE, 32 bolls, 4 sheep, 24 poultry.

DENS, 8 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

MILL OF CRICHIE, 12 bolls, 2 sheep, 12 poultry.

CORTHAIRHOUSE, 8 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

SCROGHILL, 3 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

BRUNTBRAE, 6 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

LITTLE ELRICK, 6 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

ANAQUHY, 8 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

MEIKLE ELRICK, 12 bolls, 2 sheep, 6 poultry.

In the *Antiquities of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff* this is given 11 sheep, and so in several others, but this seems plainly an error for ii.

Then there are also Mill of Achnagat, Oycorn, Sauehock and Auchnagat, Aldton, Barrack, Knaven, Achmaledie, Meikle and Little Achreddie, Mains of Fedderat, Schevado, Auchmunziel, Cairnbanno, Aldtown, Brucehill, Corbyhill, Allathan, Corsegicht, Balmakelly, Brownhill, Whitecairns, Earnside, Achquhat, Meikle Achyoch, Artamford, Little Achyoch, Culchis, Pondlarcroft, Crookla, Atherb, Craigmill, Achlek, Badforsky, Aldmad. These New Deer holdings are rated in all at 322½ bolls, 41 sheep, 2198 poultry.

GLAKREOCH is valued at 10 bolls, 2 sheep, 40 poultry.

BENWELLS, 8 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

ALTRY, 32 bolls, 8 sheep, 24 poultry.

CRYLA, 5 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

SKELEMERO, 8 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

AUCHMACHAR, 10 bolls, 2 sheep, 12 poultry.

SMIDDIELAND and the KIRKTOWN, 10 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

PARKHOUSE, 16 bolls, 1 sheep and a half, 9 poultry.

RYTRE OF BIFFIE, 16 bolls, 2 sheep, 12 poultry.

THE RAW OF BIFFIE, 16 bolls, 2 sheep, 12 poultry.

The fourteen oxen of PARKHOUSE are valued at 4 bolls.

CLERKHILL, 3 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry.

The teinds of CUTHILL are tithed by the Abbot [] .

BRIDGEHOUSE, 1 boll.

MILL OF BRUXIE is valued at 40 bolls.

The vicarage income of Deir for the same year of 1544 is made up thus:—

Easter payments: £52 6s. 2d.

Teind wool: 66 stones.

Teind lambs: 385.

Teind cheeses: 116 score.

Funeral dues: £21 9s. for 10½ months.

The revenue from Peterugy, Foveran, and Kynedir is also given, and the whole is signed by Robert Stevenson. Another copy of the Abbey rent-roll, of date 20th November, 1544, is signed by Gilbert Chisholm, as Prior, and by the rest of the brethren. It is entirely in Latin, and differs in no essential particular from Stevenson's, save that it gives details of the Manor of Deir commonly and in the common tongue called *Mains of Cuthill*. There are 3½ chalders grain, 4½ chalders oatmeal, 1 dozen capons, 2 dozen poultry, 144 breeding or keine ewes, in payment for each of which there is to be two shillings and towards the keeping of 80 wedders. The servants of the place, Jok Holmis, Wille Dicke, Wille Bowman, and Robert Mowresoun, have reserved for them the crofts called Schowane, and the peats of the land called Lamymuir. The name Schowane has disappeared, Lammerbogs, near Kinknockie, alone resembles the designation of the Abbey servants' peat-moss. Clackriach and Little Elrick have been let in feu-farm to Alexander Keith. Skelemerno is spelt Skillemarnocht.

Keeping to our own parish, we see that the Monastery owned in value almost one-half of the parish, although much less than one-half in extent. In the fifteenth century Kinmundy was owned by Sir Alexander Seton of Touch-Fraser, but by the opening of the sixteenth century it had been sold to John Gordon of Lungar, and was confirmed in 1543 to John Gordon of Pitlurg, and Janet Ogilvie, his spouse, at which time it formed part of the barony of Kynedwart, although it was created a free barony of Kinmundy, in 1588.

Taking a rapid survey of the situation as on the eve of the Reformation, we see the Abbot of Deir and his Convent in possession of a large and valuable domain, covered by the properties already mentioned ; we have the Earl Marischal as proprietor of Aden and Little Crichie ; Crauford of Fedderat is laird of Annochy, while Gordon of Pitlurg is at Kinmundy. There are Inneses at Pitfour, and a burgess stock of Andersons at West Crichie, and Knock is in the hands of a family of Knox of that Ilk.

The first glimpse of the parish lands after the Reformation is given by a process of November, 1574, in the Sheriff-Court of Aberdeen. William, Earl Marischal, Lord Keith, &c., as farmer of the teinds of the parish, which had been let to him by the Commendator, pursues certain defaulting proprietors or tenants—probably both. There is a William Pendreiche, or Pittendrich in Cairnorchies, written wrongly Carnvoquheis. Four persons have Toux—William Laurence, elder, William Laurence, younger, William Stacarte, and John Laurence. Robert Body, Thomas Adamson, and John Pantoun are all in Pitfour, the last at Legget, a holding which has long since disappeared. Andrew Knox of that Ilk is at Knockailhouse, Andrew Pendreich and John Myln are at Auld Knock, Margaret Innes, Lady Delgaty, has Parkyeocht, Jane Ogston is at Millbreck, John Kid at Meikle Crichie, Andrew Myln at Bruntbrae, John Godsman and William Cassie are at Clochcan, and William Crauford still has Annaquhie. There is a John Gordon at Auchmuchar, and there are numerous defaulters in New Deer as well as in Peterugy and Foveran. Decision is given in the Earl's favour, and the defendants are to pay, " for the year 1571, at the rate of 25 shillings, usual money of Scotland, for ilk boll of meal ; 30 shillings for 1572 ; and, for 1573, 46 shillings and eight-pence, conform to the feiris of that ilk yeiris."

Strangely enough the next view of the distribution of land comes also from a teind process. It has been held to be a draft of a process of valuation, of 4th February, 1635, at the instance of Alexander Martin, Minister of the Kirk of Deir, against the heritors. Fetterangus then appears for the first time in a civil action as an integral part of the parish of Deir. Meikle Crichie is owned partly by Alexander Bannerman of Elsick, and partly by John Walker ; Toux and Pitfour are in the hands of Sir Robert Innes of Innes, and Thomas Bodie in Peterhead ; Gordon of Pitlurg has Kinmundy ; Parcock and Skelmuir have passed to Fraser of Techmuiry. There is still a Knox of that Ilk, and Fetterangus is part of the heritage of Sir William Keith of Ludquharn.

John Keith possesses Clackriach, and John Irvine of Brocklaw has Altrie ; Strauchan, younger of Glenkindie, owns Annochy ; Patrick Strauchine, of Kinaldie, and Andro Barclay, of Auchreanie, are mentioned in the preamble but not in the valuation proper. All the rest of the parish is given up as the Earl Marischal's. Great changes have already taken place in the boundaries of properties, and their extent may partly be estimated from the sworn rental, which has one feature of interest—it still rules the stipend of the minister of the parish. The total rental is stated as 1825 bolls of oatmeal, and of this, 872 bolls, or 9-19 belongs to the Earl Marischal ; Toux and Pitfour, Kinmundy, Parcock and Skelmuir, are valued at 240 bolls each, Knock and West Crichie at 96 bolls each, Fetterangus at 24, Annochy at 3, Clackriach at 8, and Altrie at 6 bolls. Altrie has plainly shrunk to a fragment of its former bulk. The valuation of Fetterangus is perhaps most noteworthy. It is given as but one seventy-sixth of the whole parish.*

These ten heritors of the year 1635 have considerably changed in the course of a generation. We find new names, along with several familiar ones, in the valuation of 1674, which gives what is to this day called *the valued rent*. The lands of Pitfour had been made a barony by Charles II. on 22nd February, 1667, when they were purchased, apparently from Thomas Bodie and Innes, by George Morrison, son of William Morrison, burgess in Aberdeen. They at that time included Toux, Pitfour, Mill of Leggatt, Cairneurchies, Drinnies, Braikeshill, Dumbmill, Teitswall, and Gachinwivis (so it is printed—an evident error for Gakenroves, a place not now known, but mentioned in our Session records) ; Parcock and Skelmuir have been acquired by a Colonel Fullerton ; Knock has passed to one of the numerous clan Keith ; Gilbert Keith has part of Little Crichie, another part being owned by George Dalgarno ; while Alexander Dalgarno has part of Cuthill (now beginning to be spelt Quithel, in defiance of etymology). Biffie is owned by Elphinstone of Warthill, Coynach by the laird of Ludquharn. The family of Ross of Arnage own Clochean ; Nathaniel Martin has Bruntbrae, and Alexander Keith has the small holding of Kidshill, while a second portion of Cuthill, Cartlehaugh, and Milladen are in the hands of George Rankin and Thomas Forbes. The Earl Marischal, Gordon of Pitlurg, the

* According to this teind valuation, Parcock and Skelmuir belonged to Fraser of Techmuiry in February, 1635. A year and a half earlier, in August, 1633, according to an interesting discovery of Mr. P. J. Anderson, LL.B., "all and whole two oxgates of the two ploughgates of the township and manor of Parcock, in the parish of Deer, and one oxgate of the ploughgate of the shady half of the same, and the seventh part of three oxgates of the said ploughgates" were conveyed by Bessie Lowsone, spouse of George Seton, at the Mill of Balcairne, with consent of her husband, to the Aberdeen Burgh Treasurer for the support of a Librarian in Marischal College. This gift of forty-four acres seems to have been lost by the College in some unexplained way. It would be of interest to know when the Burgh of Aberdeen sold this part of Parcock to Fraser of Techmuiry, and what Mrs. Bessie Lowsone or Seton did with the remainder of the three ploughgates, or 312 acres, if she had any title to them.

Strachans, and John Walker likewise appear, but Walker's portion of Meikle Crichtie has evidently diminished, for it is rated at £33 6s. 8d. The Earl Marischal's share has also shrunk. It is valued, excluding vicarage, at about four-fifteenths of the whole parish. The Poll-Book of 1696 gives a flood of light not only upon the properties, but upon the separate holdings and families in the parish. The Earl Marischal's estates remain unaltered, save that Altrie, not the Brucklay fragment, but the genuine old property of Altrie, has been sold to Captain William Binning. Gordon of Myrestoune has bought Coynach; and while Colonel Fullerton still owns Parcock, Fraser of Techmuiry has re-acquired Skelmuir. Clackriach is in possession of an Alexander Litster; Jean Keith, a life-rentrix, has Saplinbrae; and Katharine Gordon owns Cortiecrum and Mill of Skelmuir. All the other properties are held by the direct heirs of the heritors of 1674. The only persons not rated are children of the poorer folk under 16, and in all 1,370 persons, old and young, are noted as paid for, and there are 119 separate holdings within the parish. As another generation saw a great change owing to the rising in 1715, the Earl Marischal's lands may here be given in detail. These were Stockbridge, Broadmuir, Skillymarno, Achmacher (two holdings), Knapertiehillock, Blackness, Mill of Bruxie (where was George Fordyce, merchant, with a stock of 5,000 merks), Newmill of Bruxie, Benwalls, Quartalehouse, Auchtilaer, Denns, Mill of Crichtie, Kinnadie, Little Black Potts, Lambhillock, Elrick, Mill of Elrick, Auchnaverd, Windiewalls, Burngrains, Blackpots, and Pickletillum Waste, with Over Aden, Middle Aden, and Nether Aden, Bridgehouse, and the town of Deir. Besides the head of the family, there are Keiths at Kidshill (the Clackriach Keith has left his property to his creditors), at Meikle Crichtie, at Knock, and at Saplinbrae.

In the year 1700 a beginning is made towards the settlement with which we are ourselves familiar. In 1674 and in 1696 the lands of Pitfour, valued at £600 Scots, belonged to the family of Morrison. The Poll-Book gives the holdings. These are Pitfour and Mains of Pitfour, Brexhill, Dumbmill, Nether Toux, Nether Pitfour, Drumes, Carnurcquhies, Damms, and Milne Leggat (Taitswell and Gakenroves are not mentioned). The purchaser in 1700 was James Ferguson, advocate, laird till then of Badifurrow, near Inverurie.

Mr. Ferguson had married a sister of Captain Stuart of Crichtie several years prior to this purchase. He had been called to the bar 23rd January, 1697. He was legal adviser to his uncle, Brigadier-General James Ferguson, and under his will was guardian of his cousin. As his cousin's tutor, Mr. Ferguson sold his Kinardineshire estate, and in order to have his ward near himself he, in 1723, purchased from Gordon of Pitlurg the lands of Kinmundy, and also from the York Buildings Company certain forfeited estates of the Earl Marischal, including the lands and barony of Old Deer [Old Deer instead of Deir is now coming into common use], the dominical lands of Aden, the pendicles of Bridgehouse and Clerkhill, the Mill of Aden, the town and lands of the Kirkton, as well as

Biffie and Parkhouse of Biffie. Coynach was added to the Kinmundy property in 1744. The Earl Marischal's forfeiture led also to large additional purchases of land by Mr. Ferguson of Pitfour.

The next available valuation, that of 1755, but for a clerical error, is identical with the valuations of 1674 and 1696, and shows how great a transformation the two Jacobite risings had caused. Pitfour and Kinmundy, between them, now own considerably more than half of the parish, and the only property with which any Keith has a connection is Bruxie, which includes part of Altrie and Benwalls.

The Pitfour estates at that time included Clackriach and Skillymarno. For the first time Garden of Troup appears, as he has purchased the two properties of Elrick and Annochie. Cumine of Kininmonth has acquired Knock, and Greenbrae and Kidshall have gone to Gordon of Nethermuir and to Irvine of Schivas. Dens and Little Crichy have passed by marriage from the Stuarts, and are given as belonging to John Burnett, the father of the more celebrated John Burnett of Dens. West Crichie is still in quarters, as in the reign of James IV., but three-fourths belong to Lady Crichie and only one-fourth to the laird. With the year 1762 there is one considerable change. The young laird of Kinmundy, only son of the Lady Kinmundy who was so stout a Presbyterian, had, in October, 1756, made a runaway love-match, and one consequence was the sale of Aden, the lands of Deir, and Biffie, to Alexander Russell of Moncoffer in Banffshire. This was in 1758.

A Presbytery minute of 29th April, 1762, shows not only one or two changes in the *personnel* of the heritors, but it also shows the relative valuations of the Banffshire and Aberdeenshire portions of the parish. The Fetterangus part is valued at £1,000 Scots, the other portion, as in 1674, is given as £6,127 16s. 8d. Scots. In 1635 the proportions were as one to seventy-five; in 1762, as one to six; and in 1895 they are as one to nine.

This wide divergence makes one inclined to conjecture that in 1635 Sir William Keith of Ludquharn had only owned a very small portion of Fetterangus. Among the new proprietors are Russell of Moncoffer, Garden of Troup, James Mackie, Fetterangus, and James Reid for part of Fetterangus. Meikle Crichie had passed in its separation portions from George Keith to the heirs of Robertson, the laird of Downiehills in Peterhead. It eventually became the property of Simpson of Colliehill, and now belongs, as we have said, to the Governors of Robert Gordon's College. Knock, another holding of the Keiths, was purchased by James Cumine of Kininmonth, who sold it, prior to 1772, to Burnett of Dens, after whose death it was purchased by Buchan of Auchmacoy. Elrick and Annochie were eventually gifted to the Boys' and Girls' Hospital, Aberdeen, and passed to the newly-formed corporation, the Educational Trust, in 1888.

The remaining changes are easily told. Pitfour parted with the Clackriach

estate to the trustees of Gordon of Murtle in 1822, and he acquired the property which had longest remained in the hands of a Keith, in 1804—until December, 1785, there was a Keith at Over Altrie, but from 1786 to 1804 the estate belonged to James Farquharson. For more than a century the dominion of the great family has ceased, and it is with a keen sense of the irony of life that one reads of the Marshal Keith celebrations in Germany, and recalls the fact that there is so little practical remembrance of his kin in the land of their birth. Yet the best thing, and the most unselfish, which any of their race did, does abide. Lands, and wealth, and power, and, to a large extent, name and fame have passed away, but Marischal College remains.

If we take a glance at the tenantry of the parish, although there is an honourable feudalism for most part in the locality, and although there is great persistence in family names, no occupant of a family holding goes back to the date of the Poll-Book, 1696. A brief consideration of the summons of the year 1574, already quoted, will show the persistence of parish names, and the Poll-Book confirms it. A few hereditary tenants go beyond the century, among them Mr. Craig, the tenant of Nether Hythie, on Pitfour. One for certain goes back a century and a half, one hundred and thirty-seven of these years having been upon the same farm—in 1759, George Keith, great grandfather of the present tenant, took the farm of West Knock, at a rent of £60 Scots.

The *Poll-Book*, the *Old Statistical Account*, and the present year represent the close of three different centuries. We may, therefore, institute one or two comparisons.

In 1696 there were in the parish 119 different holdings, in 1793 there were 350 tenants, and in 1894 there were 440. In 1696 there are 1370 persons mentioned in the parish lists, and probably 2,000 may be taken as a high estimate of the whole population. In 1788 there were 3,269, and in 1891 the census gave 4,624, yet this last was a serious decline from the year 1861, when the population stood at 5,174. In few parts of the country is there a better mixture of farms of different acreage, and there are many crofts. Much the most satisfactory feature in parish history is the great advance in the comfort of working folk. A well paid man-servant in 1696 had £18 Scots a year; in 1788 he had about £6 sterling; in 1896 he will have at least from £25 to £35, and the variety and quality of his living will be greatly improved as well. All the causes which have operated during the past half century, and especially during the last twenty years to the disadvantage of laird and farmer have raised the general level of living and enjoyment among the labouring classes.* The one drawback is that ease of transport has stimulated migration, and the parish cottars and labourers are not so stable an element of the parish population as they once were. Two hundred years ago there was but one village—"the town of Deir." A century ago there were three—the village of Deir with 166, Stuartfield with 181, and Fetterangus with 81 inhabitants. In 1891 those

villages have a population of 214, 557, and 358; and there is, besides, the village of Maud, which seems likely to have a more prosperous future than any of them. The problem which awaits solution in the country parish, with its one great industry, agriculture, is how to maintain a fairly high level of population in the face of the growing fall in agricultural values. In spite of increased comfort, the dulness of rural life is oppressive, more oppressive than it ever was, relatively to the life of the town. The old stability needs to be restored, and one undeniable fact must be proclaimed with emphasis that a steady crop of men and women can only be grown in the country. Some social change must bring the requisite conditions, must stop the steady flow townwards, and make land-owning no mere luxury for the very rich, as it tends to become, so that rural life may become once more the typical setting of wholesome mirth and quiet content, as well as of regular labour. But what this change is to be, who shall say? Prophecy is easy. It is generally ridiculous. Nevertheless the recent past demonstrates that the present abundant comfort of the rural labourer, which is so pleasing and welcome a spectacle, is due to causes, which, if they continue to operate, must bring the prosperity itself to an end.



CHAPTER XI.

Eminent Men and Women.

(By John Fullerton, Esq., and the Editor.)

HERE are certain claims to citizenship in our ancient parish which very many would be willing to allow, but which the spirit of strict justice must exclude. Much as the Earls Marischal were identified with the parish, as the dominant proprietors through almost four centuries, not one of them lived here or was born here, and but one was buried in the aisle of the Keiths—George, the eighth Earl, who died at Inverugie in 1694. It is possible that John Knox was a scion of the family of Knox of that Ilk, but it is not capable of proof; and if there was a connection it was remote, and by himself forgotten. Major-General Ferguson, "the Brigadier," a gallant soldier, and an object of envy in Marlborough's train—as all men of mark seem to have been, under that greatest of generals and meanest of men—while he was the father of the first Ferguson of Kinmundy, had himself no personal tie to the parish. Yet the first outstanding native, other than those already commemorated, is connected with Kinmundy. Robert Gordon of Straloch, son of Gordon of Pitlurg and Kinmundy, the corrector and improver of Timothy Pont's maps of the various districts of Scotland, was born at Kinmundy on 14th September, 1580. He was educated at Marischal College, and is said to have been its first graduate. Yet Gordon of Straloch was never identified with the life of the place. It is far otherwise with James Ferguson, Lord Pitfour. He was born at Pitfour in 1700, the year his father acquired the estate. He was called 12th February, 1722, and became one of the most brilliant counsel at the Scottish Bar, and was afterwards one of the soundest and most eminent judges on the Scottish bench. The Pitfour Fergusons were on the royalist side, but although they never concealed their sympathies, they were not eager partisans, and had not engaged either in the Fifteen or the Forty-five. Ferguson was employed as one of the counsel in the Lovat Peerage case, which lasted from 1730 to 1733, and ended in a compromise favourable to the Highland Chief who was to close his days under the headsman's axe in the Tower of London. In 1746, along with Lockhart, afterwards Lord Covington, he undertook the politically dangerous task of defending the Jacobite prisoners at Carlisle. The two advocates did their best for the originals of Fergus M'Ivor of Glennaquoich and Evan Dhu MacCombich. "He and Lockhart" (so writes Mr. James Ferguson in "The Clan Ferguson") "found the English juries ready to hang any man who wore the tartan. It is said that the

advocates resorted to a novel device—had their servant dressed in Highland garb, managed to slip him in with the next batch of prisoners, and then, by putting each other into the box, proved conclusively that he had been with them throughout the rising, and could not possibly have been out." As having Stuart sympathies, and as an Episcopalian, Pitfour found promotion difficult. But the Scottish Bar, which is invariably and supremely just to sterling ability in its own ranks, whether the jurist be of the prevailing political colour or not, elected him Dean of Faculty in 1760, and he was raised to the Bench as Lord Pitfour in 1764.

He owed his promotion to Lord Mansfield. He succeeded William Grant, Lord Prestongrange, who has been delightfully brought before the present generation by Robert Louis Stevenson in "Catriona," and he likewise got Grant's position as one of the Lords of Justiciary. There was an unwonted fitness in the succession. The Whig Lord Advocate and Judge was a man of sweet nature, of just temper, and of "winning gentleness," and was noted in a cruel time as a public prosecutor of humane spirit, as well as of judicial mind. Lord Pitfour was cast in the same mould, and was as remarkable for clemency and considerateness in the criminal court as for acumen and breadth of view in civil causes. He was a signal instance of the truth that the greatest abilities are only completely reliable and serviceable when they are found in the setting of a high and pure character. He and Prestongrange were very unlike Stevenson's "Weir of Hermiston." It was at Lord Pitfour that Lord Kames shot out the gibe, "Ay! Pitfour, here is our hanging court, of which you are a most unworthy member, for if you got your will nobody would ever be hanged." Ramsay of Ochtertyre gives a delightful picture of Lord Pitfour's character. Self-restraint subdued and enhanced his high social gifts, and he left upon his guests "an impression of philanthropy, animation, and knowledge." It is singular that in so complete a work as the *Dictionary of National Biography* there should be no account of this most eminent judge and high-minded and distinguished man. He died 25th June, 1777. By his wife, Anne Murray, daughter of Lord Elibank, whom he married in 1733, he had three sons and three daughters. All the sons were men of distinction, the two eldest being especially remarkable, James in civil life, and Patrick as a soldier, while George, as a colonial governor, a social figure, and a humourist, must not be overlooked.

James Ferguson, long Member of Parliament for Aberdeenshire, was born in 1735, and was called to the Bar in 1757. He made large additions to the Pitfour estates, and carried out many improvements. The Abbey gardens were laid out in his time, and the lake at Pitfour was formed. He was a wise and spirited landlord, with many interests; and he is to be credited with the first serious endeavour to restore the bygone beauty of Deir by clothing the heights anew with wood, and improving the soil which the brethren of the Abbey had helped to make fertile. He built the village of Fetterangus, and it is to his taste that

our country-side owes the wealth of pleasant hedgerows, so rare in northern Scotland. He equally encouraged what was useful by the construction of a canal at St. Fergus, and by the formation of turnpike roads. He unsuccessfully contested Aberdeenshire in 1786, but sat for Banffshire until 1790, when he defeated the representative of the Fife interest. He was Member for Aberdeenshire until 1820, when he died Father of the House of Commons. He was a warm personal friend of Pitt and Dundas, and in 1816 erected a simple granite monument to their memory, hard by the entrance to Pitfour. As the inscription has it, the slab is "of the hardest native granite, but not more enduring than their fame." Pitfour was a bachelor, and a humourist, occasionally with a mild touch of cynicism. He was a kind patron of John Skinner, although himself the principal supporter of the English qualified congregation at Waulkmill. A very pleasant picture of him is incidentally given in Mr. John Skelton's "Crookit Meg." He is the hero of many quaint stories, and many of his dry sayings have been handed down. He is said to be author of the *mot*, appropriated by so high a dignitary as *Mr. Punch*—"that he had heard many speeches which changed his opinion, but never one that changed his vote." He had two farming maxims—"Shoot the fools that shoot the crows," and "ane to saw, ane to chaw, and ane to pay the rest witha"; a brief rule for the division of land profits.

It is said that when Mr. James Mitchell, afterwards factor for Pitfour, who did so much for education, came as a young lad to be instructed by the laird prior to being taken into the Estates Office, Pitfour was disappointed. The stripling had walked from Banff, and was travel-stained and stupid-looking, because he was weary. The official who had recommended Mitchell remonstrated gently, and said to Pitfour that he was mistaken in his opinion of the boy. "Are you pleased?" "Yes." "Well, keep him." Perhaps the best of all stories about Pitfour relates to the Duchess of Gordon. Rumour had it that they had once been sweethearts. Pitfour would not in anywise be wiled to Gordon Castle. At length the Duchess wrote to his all-powerful valet, John, the third in the trio—"Pitt, Pitfour, and me." The letter was brief—"Dear John, come to Gordon Castle, and bring Pitfour with you." John was in doubt as to the reply, and went to his master for counsel, "Answer as you're addressed," said Pitfour. "If she begins 'Dear John,' you must reply 'Dear Jean.'"

Lord Pitfour's second son, Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick Ferguson, was born in 1744, and was killed in battle at King's Mountain, South Carolina, in 1780. While the father has had scant justice in the matter of biography, save from Mr. James Ferguson of Kinmundy, Patrick, the son, has had his life written by Professor Adam Ferguson, as well as by his kinsman of the present generation, and an American life is in preparation. He entered the army before he was fifteen as a cornet in the Scots Greys. He was a captain at twenty-four, and saw service during a negro rebellion in Tobago. He is most to be remembered as the inventor of the breech-loading rifle. He patented his invention, and but for the

gross stupidity of the military authorities it might have been turned to great account in the American and subsequent wars. He was severely wounded at the battle of Brandywine in September, 1777. Washington, but for Ferguson's high-minded idealism, would have been picked off early in the war by a Loyalist sharp-shooter. But the young officer had his father's nobility of spirit as well as his courage, and would not sanction the attempt. He could write as well as fight.

"The length of our lives," he says in one of his letters, "is not at our command, however much the manner of them may be. If our Creator enable us to act the part of men of honour, and to conduct ourselves with spirit, probity, and humanity,—the change to another world, whether now or fifty years hence, will not be for the worse." A hundred and forty years before the fight at King's Mountain, Ben Jonson wrote the elegy of Lord Falkland, whose young and brilliant life was likewise cut short when it was little more than begun. It is the unfading tribute of a great poet to the perfection of quality:—

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make Man better be ;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere :
 A lily of a day
 Is fairer far in May,
 Although it fall and die that night—
 It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see ;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

Colonel Patrick Ferguson's early death, with its disappointment of fair promise, had a counterpart in the year 1895, when Mr. Frank William Ferguson, second son of the present laird of Pitfour, was cut off in South Africa just as he was beginning a career of eminent public usefulness.

Lord Pitfour's third son, George Ferguson, succeeded his brother, the Member. He had for long been Governor of Tobago, where his brother Patrick saw active service. His enjoyment of the estates was very brief. He was laird for little more than three months. James the "Member," and George the "Governor," were the last of the old Scottish gentry who kept a town-house in the High Street of Edinburgh. "George was noted for his hospitality and taste in wine; and when his stock was sold after his death, one parcel marked 'my mother's wine' brought a great price on account of its supposed age, but after all it turned out to be nothing better than a manufacture of the good lady's own, distilled from the humble Scottish gooseberry."

As became the son of a Colonel of the Cameronian regiment, and an officer of William of Orange, the first Laird of Kinmundy was a zealous Hanoverian, and his zeal was more than equalled by the courage of the lady of the house, his first wife, Elizabeth Deans, whose public career began and ended with the rising

of '45. So far as their history is of general interest, it has been touched upon in connection with the ministry of Mr. Forbes of Pitnacadell. The purchaser in 1758 of a portion of the Kinmundy property, Alexander Russell of Monecoffer and Aden, played a part in a drama of a different kind. He was one of the guardians of Catherine Gordon, heiress of Gight, and mother of Lord Byron. In her letters she calls him "uncle," but he was only a near kinsman. Colonel Duff of Fetteresso was his companion in the trust, and father of Mary Duff, Byron's very first love. Mr. Russell and Colonel Duff did the best that guardians could for their "plain, ill-tempered, and ill-mannered" ward, who on 13th May, 1785, in St. Michael's Church, Bath, stepped so unexpectedly into wretchedness and fame. The guardians tried hard to save the property so long associated with the name of Gordon, and when it had to be sold to pay mad Jack Byron's debts, they reserved a small annuity for his hardly-used wife. During the ten years' stay in Aberdeen, the boy and his mother occasionally visited Aden, but no recollection of the romantic surroundings has found a place in his poetry. Mr. Russell, like his neighbour at Pitfour, planted largely, and the natural beauty of the winding valley has been strikingly brought out and greatly added to by the wealth of woodland. There are few lovelier bits of river scenery than the stretch of the Ugie from the Brig of Deer to what was of old called the hamlet of Bridgehouse, of which name there is still a recollection in the Brig'us park. The Gaelic Aluinn Alden, or Auden—the bonnie burn or the bonnie braeside—is, like all Celtic names, singularly appropriate. The Aden family have, like their neighbours, had emphatic experience of the tragedy of life. Ensign Alexander Cumming Russell, great-grandson of Catherine Gordon's guardian, and eldest brother of the present proprietor of Aden, was one of those who perished by the loss of the *Birkenhead* in 1852. The heroism of the four hundred and fifty Britons who sank within sight of the shore of Africa, that the women and children might be saved, has had its due meed of honour, and it will live in men's memories through many a year by reason of Frederick William Robertson's sermon on the *Glory of the Cross*. Ensign Russell has a special title to remembrance. He was one of those who were being saved, when he sprang out of a ship's boat to rescue a drowning man. He succeeded, but the effort cost his own life.

In John Burnett of Dens and Crichie (1729-1784), who succeeded to the Crichie property in 1769 through his mother Mrs. Theodosia Burnett or Stuart, and who added largely to it by purchase, we have one of the many benefactors of the parish and county. He was proprietor of Knock and Kinnadie, as well as of Dens and Little Crichie and Mill of Crichie, and of the village of Stuartfield and of Quartalehouse. His benefaction for the poor on his own estates in the parish has been already noted. He left two-thirds of the rents of Kinnadie to the poor of the city of Aberdeen conditionally, and when a legal assessment for poor-relief came to be levied, the revenue passed to the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

He left another part of his means to further inoculation, and a part for the relief of the lunatic poor. The remaining third of the rents of Kinnadie accumulated for thirty years after his death and was competed for in 1815 as the Burnett Prize. There was a second accumulation for forty years and a fresh competition. On both occasions the second prize was awarded to the most distinguished man—at least to the man among the competitors, successful and unsuccessful, who lived to achieve the greatest distinction. John Bird Sumner, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, a great-uncle of the present laird of Crichtie, was second in 1815, and John Tulloch, afterwards Principal and Primarius Professor of Divinity in St. Mary's College, Saint Andrews, was second in 1855. The Burnett Prize has been converted into a Burnett Lecture.

Among the eminent men connected with the parish an honourable place will always fall to Mr. George Smith, the donor of the Smith Prize fund, already mentioned in our chapter on Education. Mr. Smith was born in the farm-house of Mill-hill, on the Kinmundy estate, on 10th February, 1808. He was a pupil of Mr. Alex. Webster at the parish school of Deir, and thereafter studied at a private school in Udny, and at Marischal College. For three years he was a medical pupil of Dr. Christie, a relative of his own, but medicine was not to his liking, and he became tenant of the farm of Recloch in Turriff. Farming proved as little congenial as medicine, and he therefore left his affairs in the hands of his cousin, Mr. Alex. Anderson, advocate in Aberdeen (afterwards Sir Alexander Anderson), and emigrated to the United States in 1833 or 1834. After more than a year of moving about, he settled in Chicago, which had then a population under 400. He bought certain lands in Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Chicago, but, forecasting the financial panic of 1837, he sold again, and in the autumn of 1836 returned to Scotland. While in Scotland he organised the Illinois Investment Company, and with a share-capital of over £100,000 he returned to America in 1837, started the Marine and Fire Insurance Company of Wisconsin, and, with the charter, obtained from Congress power to issue notes. He was president and sole director of the Company. He established in Chicago the Bank of America in 1850. He owned other banks as well, among them the Bank of Atlanta, and the Bank of Georgia. All stood the stress of the disastrous year of 1857. He revisited Scotland in 1856. In America his success was uninterrupted, and he became the reputed Money King of the North-Western States. Various guesses have been made as to his wealth, but its real proportions are probably known only to himself. He was for a short time proprietor of West Hall in Aberdeenshire, and of North College, Elgin. Those who know him attribute his success largely to his insight into character and to his partiality for the service of men of eminent capability and integrity.

Mr. Smith gave £3,000 to the new University Buildings Fund in Aberdeen, and the portion of his private liberality which has become known through the gratitude of recipients has been not only munificent, but pre-eminently well-

considered and instinct with good feeling. For many years he has lived quietly in London, keenly alive to the welfare of the parish of his birth, and eager and alert in the cause of education.

In the year 1834 another native of Deir, who has come to distinction in a different walk of life, went to America. This was Margaret Robertson, daughter of the Rev. William Robertson of Stuartfield Congregational Church, and aunt to be of Professor Robertson Smith. She is now a Mrs. Walton, and has written many books under the *nom de guerre* of John Haberton. Her early life and experience in Buchan, and her recollections of Buchan folk and Buchan places, have furnished part of her literary material, more conspicuously in *The Two Miss Dawsons*. She is best known, however, as the "Uncle Harry" who wrote that charming book about Budge and Toddie—*Helen's Babies*.

There are those still active in our midst who will one day more than deserve an ample record in a chapter dealing with the eminent men and women of Deir, but it is not fitting that their story should be told, or their work estimated with that of others who actually or virtually belong to the past.



CHAPTER XII.

Epilogue.

OUR parish record, as we have seen, leaves traces through many centuries. It appeals to us at many times, and during many striking epochs. Yet it is easier to recall the annals in detail, bare and fragmentary as they often are, than to reach any general conclusions which will be of much value. The material progress is manifest. There is practically no comparison between the resources of the eighteenth and of the seventeenth century and the wealth of the present—no comparison, at least, which does not tell overwhelmingly in favour of the present; but with this progress there has been a distinct infringement of the unity of parish life. This was inevitable after the Revolution, when the feudal ideal began to give way to the industrial, and when great diversity of religious conviction made ecclesiastical separation imperative. This diversity has gone on increasing, and the dissipation of parochial energy—indeed of national energy—is in nothing more conspicuous than in the multiplication of places of worship and of religious communities. It is the more notable when we think how sacred a place is our Christian sanctuary in the eyes of all who have any feeling for the past, and how much there is in its continuity—alas! that it should be in its continuity alone—to make men forget the mere vestments of the Christian Church, and to cleave to the body and substance of the Faith.

There has been a great want, both on the civil and on the spiritual side—a something lacking which might have helped not the parish alone, but the whole province. We read of the sway of Celtic and Norman Earls of Buchan, of Fergus and his kin, and of the Comyns and the Keiths, but they left no visible memorial which could creep into the imagination when they were gone, and which would help them to sway men's spirits or to touch them to nobler issues. Such a symbol might have been helpful, had it existed. Its absence would have been of less consequence had there been another symbol, and a more important one. Iona and St. Andrews seize and hold the imagination, because, to bear witness to their hallowed associations and venerable tradition, there yet remains some intelligible portion of their vanished splendour. The work of men's hands, albeit largely in ruins, is still so evident that the past can never be overlooked, even by the most careless. Thus we feel how wise a teacher, as well as how great a man of letters Mr. Ruskin has been in his generation. For we look at the old towers and walls, and at the few holy places which time and men's passions have still suffered to abide, and we know how true as well as beautiful is his testimony:—"For, indeed, the greatest glory of a building is not in its

stones, nor in its gold. Its glory is in its Age, and in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, nay, even of approval or condemnation, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity. It is in their lasting witness against men, in their quiet contrast with the transitional character of all things, in the strength which, through the lapse of seasons and times, and the decline and birth of dynasties, and the changing of the face of the earth, and of the limits of the sea, maintains its sculptured shapeliness for a time insuperable, connects forgotten and following ages with each other, and half constitutes the identity, as it concentrates the sympathy of nations ; it is in that golden stain of time that we are to look for the real light and colour and preciousness of architecture ; and it is not until a building has assumed this character, till it has been entrusted with the fame and hallowed by the deeds of men, till its walls have been witnesses of suffering and its pillars rise out of the shadows of death, that its existence, more lasting as it is than that of the material objects of the world around it, can be gifted with even so much as these possess of language and of life." This preciousness of architecture, with its golden stain of time, has been denied to us. Perhaps some one, some day, may so enter into the spirit of the past as to make amends for the deficiency. The golden stain would come if the architecture were precious, and such as could be counted worthy of the great Irish Saint whose labours we are enjoined by the General Assembly to commemorate a year hence, thirteen centuries after he has passed to his rest, and if it were worthy above all, as he would have desired, of the worship of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT, into whose name he baptised the rude and wondering tribes who then dwelt in Deir. One falls, almost against one's will, into a vein of moralising, and no sentences of counsel come readier to the memory than those of Mr. Ruskin : " Men cannot benefit those that are with them as they can benefit those who come after them ; and of all the pulpits from which the human voice is ever sent forth, there is none from which it reaches so far as the grave." " Nor is there, indeed, any present loss in such respect for futurity. Every human action gains in honour, in grace, in all true magnificence, by its regard to things that are to come. It is the far sight, the quiet and confident patience, that, above all other attributes, separate man from man and near him to his Maker ; and there is no action nor art whose majesty we may not measure by this test. Therefore when we build, let us think that we build for ever. Let it not be for present delight nor for present use alone ; let it be such as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labour and wrought substance of them—' See ! this our fathers did for us.' "

APPENDIX.

I.

THE legend of the foundation of Deir and the gift of the town may be contrasted with the legend of the foundation of Derry.

"Columcille then went to Daire, that is, to the royal fort of Aidh, son of Ainmin, who was King of Erin at that time. The King offered the fort to Columcille, but he refused it because of Mobhi's command. On his coming out of the fort, however, he met two of Mobhi's people bringing him Mobhi's girdle, with his consent that Columcille should accept a grant of territory, Mobhi having died. Columcille settled in the fort and founded a Church." Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. ii., p. 54.

II.

PLACE-NAMES IN THE BOOK OF DEIR.

A. THE ENTRIES.—

- i. The first of these has already been quoted in Dr. Cooper's *Our Patron Saint*.
From ii. to xiii. form the second entry.
- ii. "Comgeall, son of Aed, gave from *Ortē* to *Furēnē* (or *Furerie*) to Columcille and Drostan. Moridach, son of Moreunn, gave *Pett Meic Gartnait* and *Achadh toche temni*, and the former was Mormaer, and the latter was toisech."
- iii. "Matain, son of Caerill, gave the mormaer's share in *Altere*, and Culii, son of Baten, gave the toisech's share."
- iv. "Domnal, son of Giric, and Malbrigte, son of Chathail, gave *Pett in Mulenn* to Drostan."
- v. "Cathal, son of Moreunt, gave 'the clerics' field' to Drostan."
- vi. "Domnal, son of Ruadri, and Malcolm, son of Culeon, gave *Bidbin* to God and to Drostan."
- vii. "Malcolm, son of Kenneth, gave the King's share in *Bidbin*, and in *Pett meic Gobroig*, and two *davochs* of Upper *Rosaburd*."

viii. "Malcolm, son of Maelbrigte, gave the *Delerc*; Malsnecte, son of Luloig, gave *Pett Malduib* to Drostan."

ix. "Domnal, son of Mac Dubbacin, mortified all the offering to Drostan giving the whole of it to him."

x. "Cathal immolated in the same way his chief's share, and gave a dinner of a hundred every Christmas and every Easter to God and to Drostan."

xi. "Cainnech, son of Mac Dobarcon, gave *Alterin-alla-uethe* or *bhethe, na-camone*, as far as the birch tree between the two *Alterins*."

xii. "Domnal and Cathal gave *Etdanin* to God and to Drostan."

xiii. "Cainnech, and Domnal, and Cathal mortified all these offerings to God and Drostan, from beginning to end in freedom from mormaer and toisech to the day of judgment."

xiv. "Gartnait, son of Cainnech, and Ete, daughter of Gille Michael, gave *Pett Mac Cobrig* for the consecration of a church of Christ, and Peter, the Apostle, both to Columcille and to Drostan, free from all exactions, with the gift of them to Cormac, Bishop of Dunkeld, in the eighth year of David's reign. Witnesses: Nectan, Bishop of Aberdeen; Leot, Abbot of Brechin; Maledon, son of Macbead; Algune, son of Arcell; and Ruadri, Mormaer of Marr; Matadan, the brehon; Gillechrist, son of Domnal; and Domongart, ferleghin of Turbruad; and Gillecotaim, son of Muredach; Dubui, son of Maelcotaim." This single entry is the third in the original MS.

xv. "Gartnait and [Ete] the daughter of Gillemichel gave *Ball Domin* in *Pet Ipair* to Christ, and to Columcille, and to Drostan. Witnesses: Gillecaline priest, and Feradach, son of Malbhricin, and Maelgirc, son of Tralin."

xvi. "Donchad, son of MacBethad, son of Hided, gave *Achadh Madchor* to Christ, and to Drostan, and to Columcille, in freedom, for ever: Malechi, Comgell, and Gillechrist, son of Fingune, in witness thereof, and Maelcolum, son of Moline."

xvii. "Cormac, son of Cennedig, gave as far as *Scali Merlic*, or *Scali Merlech*."

xviii. "Comgell, son of Caennech, toisech of Clan Canan, gave to Christ, and to Drostan, and Columcille as far as *Gort-lie-mór* (the field of the great stone) at the hither end, which is nearest to *Aldin Alenn*, from *Dabaci* to *Lurchari* both mountain and field, in freedom from toisech for ever: and his blessing on every one who shall fulfil this after him, and his curse on every one who shall go against it."

xvi. to xviii. make the fifth set of entries; and the following is the sixth:—

xix. "Colbain, Mormaer of Buchan, and Eva, daughter of Gaitnait, his wedded wife, and Donnachac, son of Sithech, toisech of Clan Morgainn, immolated all the offerings to God, and to Drostan, and to Columcille, and to Peter the Apostle, from all the burdens for a share of four davochs of what would come on the chief residences [monasteries] of Scotland generally and on chief churches. Witnesses: Broccin and Cormac, Abbot of Turbruaid, and Morgunn, son of Donchad, and Malaechin and Matnes, two sons, and the nobles of Buchan, all in witness hereof in Elan."

xx. The last entry is the Latin charter of David I. It is written in a different hand from the Gaelic notices. It may be rendered thus:—"David, King of Scots, to all his honest men greeting: Know that the clerics of Deir are to be at rest and exempt from every obligation of laymen, and from all undue exaction, **EVEN AS IT IS WRITTEN IN THEIR BOOK**; and [as] they argued at Bamb and swore at Abberdeon. Wherefore I firmly command that no man presume to inflict any injury upon them or upon their cattle and chattels. Witness: Gregory, Bishop of Duncalden; witness: Andrew, Bishop of Cat; witness: Samson, Bishop of Brechin; witness: Duncan, Earl of Fife and Mormaer [Malmor] of Thotla; and Gillebride, Earl of Angus; and Gillcomded Mac Aed, and Brocin, and Cormac of Turbruaid, and Adam Mac Ferdomnac, and Gillendrias Mac Matni, at Abberdeon."

B. THE LOCALITIES.—Certain postulates seem a necessary preliminary to any fruitful results. As to *language*, in spite of a very careful paper read before the Buchan Field Club, in February, 1894, by John Gray, Esq., B.Sc., Brixton, the clue to the place-names of the Book of Deir, as of the earlier place-names of the whole district, is in the Gaelic tongue. There may be, here and there, a tinge of Norse. As to situation, the various properties of the Celtic monastery, to which these Gaelic entries refer, are to be looked for among the possessions of the Cistercian Abbey of Deir, and other kindred religious communities—the Abbey of Arbroath for one; and they are not to be looked for in Deir only, or even in Buchan. We must not look at the place-names only. Description helps, in one case almost to certainty. It is possible that a fresh reading of the original MS. may lead to further identifications.

About some of the localities there is substantial agreement among all scholars. *Abberdoboir* is Aberdour, the confluence of the water, and *Deir* is Deir. *Altere* is Altrie, holy land (according to Dr. A. C. Cameron), one of the many possessions of the Abbey in the immediate vicinity. The name continued until the 18th century. We find in the Poll-Book for 1696 Altrie, Over Altrie, Nether Altrie. The mansion-house of Altrie stood where is now the steading of the farm of Brownhill. The name seems to have lost its importance when the proprietor built the mansion-house of Bruxie on the sunny side of the hill; and

when both properties merged in Pitfour, the old name vanished with the Keiths. The antiquity of the name and the importance of the property may be estimated by the title Lord Altrie given to Robert Keith, Commendator of Deir. *Bidbin* is commonly taken to be Biffie, and is explained as the tufted hillock, or the yellow hill. *Alterin-alla-uethe-na-cumone*, that is (according to A. C. Cameron, Esq., LL.D., late of Fettercairn, to whom I am indebted for much help about these place-names), *holy land, holy water of the crooked place*, as far as the birch tree between the two Alterins, is plainly some other portion of the Altrie property. Stokes renders it "Little Altrie of the birch cliff." *Achadh Madchor* is Auchmachar, which may mean the field of S. Machar, or the field of the low-lying level ground. *Scali Merlic* is Skillymarno, adjoining Auchmachar. Mr. Macdonald in his fascinating and for the most part convincing book on the "Place-Names of Strathbogie" would make it Killymarno, and therefore the chapel of St. Marnan, no trace of which remains in stone or record. If *Scali Merlic* be the correct reading, Killymarno must be set aside altogether. Mr. Gray, of Brixton, finds light in the Basque tongue, and makes *sakela merla*—a pocket of rich black earth. Dr. A. C. Cameron conjectures "the thieves' shelter," which is identical with Mr. Whitley Stokes's rendering, "hut of the thieves." *Scali* certainly seems part of *skulan*, a hut or "shieling," and *merlic* may be connected with *marlā*, meaning marl or clay. The corresponding French words make the same transformation as in Skillymarno, for *marle* becomes *marne*. *Scali Merlic* would thus be the *Clay Biggin!* *Alden Aluinn* is plainly Aden, which has kept its name steadily through many centuries, and retains in the pronunciation what it has lost in the spelling. If we keep to the form *Alden*, which is all but uniform, it is "the bonnie burn"; if we take the form *Auden* it will be *Aodann*—the bonnie brae-side. Sometimes one would like to be thoroughly capricious, and make it a variant of *Arden*—the bonnie heights. Many of the places cannot be identified, and we are left to mere surmise. *Cloch in tiprat*, "the stone of the well," suggests Tippertie. But there is no Tippertie in Aberdour or Deer, although there is such a place in the parish of Logie-Buchan. *Cloch Pette meic Gurnait*, "the stone of the portion (or homestead) of Gurnait's son," suggests at once *Petmegartney*, a property in the Mearns, which belonged to the Abbey of Arbroath. Mr. Gray thinks it is *Mucknagran*, half-way between Aberdour and Auchentum.

Orte to Furene: Cairnorches is the only name in the neighbourhood which has *orch* or *orth*, a boundary, in its composition, except Philorth, and while Furene suggests Pitfour, it more naturally reminds one of Fouerne or Foveran, where the Abbey of S. Mary had considerable possessions. If it is connected with *fueran*—a well—this is too general a designation to be specially applied now to any one locality. Mr. Gray makes it Killiequharn, in Aberdour. *Achadh toche temni* has as yet baffled all experts. Mr. Gray conjectures that *achadh* and *toche* have the same meaning, and connects *Achadh* and *temni*, making Auchentum. If we

leave the *temni* and take *Achadh* and *toche* together, we may possibly get Auchyoch.

Pett meic Gobroig suggest Cabra—a part of the parish of Fetterangus, the teinds, of which belonged to the Abbey of Arbroath. Two *davochs*, or 832 acres of Upper *Rosubard*—“the forest of the bard”—was a magnificent gift, but the only name at all suggesting this is *Auchnavaird*—“the field of the bard.”

Delerc and *Pett Maelduib* do not repay any conjecture. It is probable that Dr. Skene is right in holding that the latter was in Moray. *Etdanin*, unless it be a misreading for *Aldanin*, is equally impracticable, although some find in this latter part of the word a resemblance to *Dens*, or *Dennis*, one of the Abbey farms.

Bull Domin in *Pet Ipair* suggests no place in the neighbourhood. *Bull* is, of course, *Bal*, or *Baile*, a town. *Domini* suggests *Dumms*, an old holding, long since absorbed in Cairnorches, the Home Farm of Pitfour. Leaving these as more or less impracticable, we come to a third class of the names, of which a probable explanation may be attempted.

Pett in Mulenn suggests *Pitmillan* in Foveran, which was an Abbey property. In 1574, among the defaulters summoned by the Earl Marischal “as fermorar of the teynd schaves,” there was a *Pait Ramsay* in Pitmillan. But a holding with a mill must have been so common that there may well have been a Pitmillan in Deir, although no trace now remains of the name.

Achadh-na-glérec—the clerics’ field—has but one locality with any resemblance to it in name, and that is a small pendicle of land which lay between the village of Deir and the Wuddy Hill, if the Wuddy Hill be not part of the pendicle itself. It is called *Clerkhill*—“the hill of the clerics”. It is among the monastic holdings, and in 1544 the rent was thirty shillings and six capons, and the parsonage teind was 3 bolls, 1 sheep, 6 poultry, the same as the Mill of Pitfour, and slightly lower than the Mill of Aden. The name remained until the middle of the eighteenth century, when it is mentioned in a disposition of the lands of Aden, Deir, and Biffie by the laird of Kinmundy to the laird of Moncoffer. *The field of the clerics* has left no trace in a place-name at all. I believe it remains, in fact, as the *Glebe of Deir*. This stretch of land by the water side, of most unusual extent for a glebe, seems to have been always Church property. As the Prior of the monastery, Gilbert Chisholm, was the first Protestant minister, the transference would be easy. It is near the earliest church, and the site of the old Celtic monastery. The transference from the Celtic clergy to the new order in the thirteenth century must have been equally easy. If this be a well-grounded conjecture, then from the days of Cathal, son of Morcunt, until now *Achadh-na-glérec* has deserved its name. Indeed, its name would indicate that the clerics had had some use of it before it was gifted to them. As there is no valuation of it in 1544, it was probably the glebe of the Vicar of Deir.

The only entry remaining to be discussed is full of interest. It is given in full as xviii. *Gort lie mor* is “the field of the great rock.” *Dabuci* is unintel-

ligible, and is therefore let alone. Dr. A. C. Cameron has suggested that it may be connected with "davoch." *Lurchari*, which Mr. Gray connects with Auchleuchries, seems more like Pitlurg, which was formerly a holding close by the river, not far from the wool mill of Milladen, but on the opposite side of the stream. It is possible that Pitlurg is an imported name, as the Gordons of Pitlurg were formerly owners of the Kinmundy properties. *Lurg* is a narrow or leg-shaped land. But the description, "at the hither end which is nearest Alden Alenn," ties down the locality, and the "mountain and field" confirm the designation. Quartalehouse and the lower part of Knock plainly represent this gift, and the old name of Quartalehouse is Corthilhows, Corthailhous, Cortailhouse. It was a holding belonging to the monastery, and in the *Cort* we have probably a survival of the *Gort* of *Gort-lie-mor*.

III.

THE BALLAD OF SIR JAMES THE ROSE.

A willow tree by the bank of the Ugie, close to the wall of the Abbey, was long esteemed the meeting place of the fair Matilda and her unfortunate knight.

"At night they met, as they were wont,
Deep in a shady wood,
Where on a bank, beside the burn,
A blooming saugh tree stood."

Pratt gives the preference to the *Battle Fauld* at the Mill of Haddo in Crimond. Michael Bruce's poem is not only simple, touching, and tragic, with the genuine spirit of the old Scottish ballad, sublime in its realisation of love and death, but it is a splendid illustration of the transmuting power of genius. The older ballad, where avarice conquers love, and where Sir James's dear makes a bargain with his pursuers, is exceedingly repulsive.

"But as wi' speed they rade awa,
She loudly cried behind them :
'Gin ye'll gie me a worthy meed,
I'll tell ye whaur to find him.'

'O tell, fair maid, and on our bond,
Ye'se get his purse and brechan.'
'He's on the bank, aboon the mill,
In the lawlands o' Bulcighan.'"

Her treachery is duly punished, and her consequent suicide is as unpoetic as her treachery. Bruce makes a page the traitor, and the treachery is rather ignorance than guilt. The two lovers fill his imagination, and he paints a picture on which the mind cannot but rest.





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